

# THE MASKING TRADITION IN TRIBAL INDIA



**Dr. C. MAHESWARAN**

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**S.S. JAWAHAR, I.A.S.,**

**The Principal Secretary and Commissioner of Museums,  
Government Museum, Chennai - 600 008.**



# THE MASKING TRADITION IN TRIBAL INDIA

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## **FOREWORD**

Depictions in rock art suggest that the prehistoric hunters used 'masks' to establish contact with the forces of 'World of Nature' and the 'World of Supernaturals' as well. The traditions of mask-wearing exist in some parts of the world till date, especially in the 'Tribal World'. And here, the masks continue to play a vital role of communication both in religious and social activities of many tribal societies.

Dr. C. Maheswaran, Curator for Anthropology Government Museum, Chennai has studied and documented the Masking Traditions in Tribal India. The Department of Museums is very keen in publishing this monograph as one of its new publications during this financial year of 2008-2009, with the financial assistance of Government of India and Government of Tamil Nadu.

This study of Dr.C.Maheswaran on the masking tradition of the tribes in India will certainly enthrall the readers both by its narrative part and the illustrative plates as well.

I hope that the people of all walks of life will find this monograph an interesting work of highly useful nature. I am indeed happy to bring out this book as one of the new publications of the Government Museum, Chennai in this financial year 2008-2009.

Station : Chennai - 600 008  
Date : 23-3-2009

  
(Dr. T.S. SRIDHAR, I.A.S.,)



## PREFACE

The International Council of Museums (ICOM), in 2001, stressed the significance of the study and documentation of intangible cultural heritage, besides the traditional focus on the tangible objects of cultural heritage. Realizing this fact, I have ventured in studying and documenting the various facets of intangible cultural heritage of different ethnic groups. 'The Masking Tradition in Tribal India' is the outcome of one such original research work done by me in this direction, independently during my curatorial career.

Tribal masks in isolation and away from their original cultural contexts seem to cease communicating (i.e., 'mute') and look very ordinary (i.e., 'insignificant'). However, the tribal communities observing the masking tradition believe that the masks usually are found to preserve mysterious powers within them even when they are not in functional use. Through the 'masks' and their connected ritual processes, viz., the 'masking traditions' the tribal people feel to be in touch with both 'Natural' and 'Supernatural forces' and believe in befriending them for their continued, successful existence.

In Tribal India, it is believed that if the face is masked by a mask it becomes 'another face' and the body too becomes 'another body' since it feels a 'new being' flows in from the mask. And the masking traditions which are often accompanied by powerful music and solemn signing lead them to a state of collective hysteria.

I wish to record my deep sense of gratitude to our Principal Secretary / Commissioner of Museums Dr.T.S.Sridhar, I.A.S., for having included this monograph as one of the new publications of the Department of Museums in the financial year of 2008-2009.

Station : Chennai – 600 008

Date : 23-3-2009

(C. MAHESWARAN)

**Dedicated**

**to**

**Those Silent Unacknowledged and Unknown Tribal Artists**

**who have preserved for centuries**

**the cultural heritage and traditions in the ever creative avenues of**

**the visual world**

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# **I . INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 The Place of Tribal Art in the Realm of Art**

Art is the product of deep-rooted human urge to give expression to emotional drives through rhythmic patterns in various art forms. The most important feature of art lies in the artist's skill, vision & sensibilities and that tools and materials are merely a means for realizing these quintessential qualities.

Primitive technology does indeed place some restraints on artists in primitive societies, limiting the range of what they can do. But, if art is thought of as a skillful manipulation of visual media, then even the simplest material cultures have domains in which a high level of skill can be exercised. And even the latest complex human technologies provide a sufficient basis for the production of valid art. Since art is the autobiography of culture we locate in it aspirations, achievements and future vision of the tribal people. In the contemporary world of art, the tribal people have made their own place by contributing their richest traditions to the treasures of art. And that is why, Leonard Adams, a notable Anthropologist (as quoted in R.S.Shukla, 2000:103) rightly says, "for full appearance of a work of art, it should be seen as far as possible in which it was created. It is particularly true of primitive art".

'Tribal art' is merely a general term encompassing the art products (viz., artefacts and craftfacts) and performances (viz., music, dance and rituals) of tribal people. As both the tribal artefacts and craftfacts are documents of cultural heritage of the tribal people, these art products reveal, through their symbols, the most elaborate efforts of the creativity of the tribal people.

In a tribal community, every member is an artist by birth. Each tribal member is not only an artist but an onlooker as well. Although tribal emotions tend towards aesthetic value the tribal art forms are normally not appreciated apart from its utilitarian or socio-cultural significance. However, the tribal people seem to be aware of the mysterious outer space as well as inner space and consequently they symbolize them with their own motifs. Their expressions may be abstract or symbolic, depending upon the individual talent of the person making the image or form. And that is why, it is quite natural to realize that the “tribal art is entirely ‘functional’ and cannot be appreciated apart from its utilitarian and social significance” (R.S. Shukla, 2000:103).

Technically the tribal art concentrates more on three aspects, namely, the plastic design, the exploitation of material and the anonymous artist. Creating a work of art is a process that takes place on two levels, first, in the artist’s mind and second, in his hands. The tribal artist has certain ritualistic restrictions placed upon his mode of work. For example, the tribal artist can only work in a place where he would not be seen by women or young male persons who have not yet been initiated into the society that is entitled to use the resultant art products. Sometimes the tribal artists also prefer to work in solitude, not for magico-religious reasons but for either avoiding distractions or to protect their skills being copied by others. The tribal artists, at times, are told to abstain from sexual intercourse during the period of their artistic creation.

Tribal artists are also found to work in a leisurely fashion interrupting work on crafting a work of art for several weeks or months whenever other duties beckon them. Contrary to this, in some other tribal communities the tribal artists are observed to work with intense absorption, going from the beginning right through the end of a project, pausing only enough to appraise their progress occasionally or allow the completed work to dry.

## **1.2 Scope of the Present Study**

Until recent times a very few efforts have been made to uncover the tribal art forms. Verrier Elwin, the distinguished Cultural Anthropologist was of the opinion

that there must be countless other examples of tribal art hidden away in remote villages which would take a life-time to discover (in 'Preface' of his monumental work, *The Tribal Art of Middle India*). Taking this cue, the author of this work has ventured to study the tribal masks and as a consequence the present monograph has taken its genesis. Further, the array of masks of beautiful shapes and fine textures attracted him to delve deep into this genre of tribal craft.

The present study deals with the descriptive narration of the tribal creativity and achievements, regarding the crafting of masks and observance of the masking tradition by making use of the craftefacts, the 'masks'. In the course of present study, all the major museums in India were visited by the author of this monograph having undertaken a thorough tour to different parts of India from time to time.

### 1.3 Significance of the Present Study

Tribal culture is generally gleaned by studying the various utilitarian artefacts (i.e., 'Material Culture') and the different performances observed in the day-to-day tribal affairs (i.e., 'Non-material Culture') as well. While study of the tribal culture needs actual visit to the tribal hamlets, concerned the study of tribal material culture could be achieved by a visit to the cultural institutions such as museums, school of drama themselves where such cultural artefacts are in presentation and preservation.

While the material culture could reveal a *part culture* the non-material culture could reveal the remaining *part culture*. However, one should bear in mind that the tribal artefacts tend to loose their cultural implications and consequently become mute objects when alienated from their original cultural ambience and kept in presentation in the galleries of museums. To add life and meaning to these mute objects of cultural heritage, modern museographers and museologists try to replicate their cultural ambience in one way or other by employing various techniques of presentation. Replicating of cultural ambience becomes a relatively tough job when such objects of cultural heritage are found to occupy the domain of ritual practices.

'Masks in tribal India' pose such an intricate problem. As the masking traditions tend to become obsolete on the onslaught of various socio-economic factors such as industrialization, urbanization, marginalization, consequently the mask-making (i.e., crafting of mask) also becomes a rare artistic activity. The tribal masks, at present, tend to occupy the shelves of reserve collections and or the showcases of museum galleries rather than the attic of tribal huts and or the sanctum sanctorum of tribal shrines.

Hence, one could realize that it is high time to study, document and present the masking tradition that is prevalent in tribal India. As both the traditions of mask-making and mask-wearing are getting receded in tribal India, it is felt that the masking tradition could at least be studied from the tribal masks that are in the collections of major Indian Museums. With this genuine objective in mind, the author of this monograph has ventured to study, document and present the masking traditions that have been prevalent in tribal India.

As the situation in tribal India is in the state of melting pot of cultures, such academic and professional ventures are realized as the need of the hour. From the academic point of view the present monograph will provide a scope for higher studies of cultural heritage of the people of tribal India. Further, this present work will help to know the creative aspect of tribal people of India, their symbols and motifs.

#### **1.4 Research Methodology employed in the Present Study**

The tribal masks in the collections of Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya (Bhopal) were studied by undertaking tours.

The data elicited on the tribal masks from the above study tours were later recorded appropriately with photographic documentation. Apart from such primary sources, the works of Verrier Elwin (1951, 1954 & 1959), Ashutosh Bhattacharya (1972), A.K. Das (1979), U.C. Misra (1990) were referred for cross-reference and additional data, if any.



### **1.5 Limitations of the Present Study**

The scope of the present study is with the following limitations:

(i) The masking tradition associated with all the tribal masks studied could not have been included in this research report, as adequate data were wanting in the 'Accession Registers' referred.

(ii) Although more than 150 tribal masks were studied the detailed accounts for only 99 of them and the photographs of a section of those tribal masks alone could be presented in this monograph due to certain unavoidable circumstances.

## **II. MASKS: A MULTI-FACETED PERSPECTIVE**

### **2.1 General**

As the 'Masks' are one of the important art forms with utilitarian aspects, they cannot merely be looked at as other ethnographic materials. These masks have a vivid strong appeal in the art of characterization. In other words, the mask is construed as a perfect transmitter of facial expressions. And consequently, imagination is given full play in the conception and the depiction of these masks, which are largely representing the frightening and weird aspects. The wood carver's skill and painter's brush give life to a whole galaxy of fantastic characters. Further, they are regarded as the 'collective representations' of social and religious forces and thus believed to play an essential part in ceremonies re-enacting what the original myth really meant about human life.

This particular variety of craftefacts would certainly be of interest to any student of ethnography who would wish to evaluate the significance of the craft in its aesthetic, socio-economic and cultural contexts of the day-to-day life of the people using these masks. The professional obligation and outlook as museum curator immediately committed the author of this work to make a thorough study and document these fascinating cultural artefacts before it is too late.

Masks are generally large and heavy. "A suitable block of wood is carefully hollowed out and the front is shaped to hollow a fairly prominent nose and indication of ears. Mouth and eyes are cut through, the mouth being often quite square or rectangular. The nostrils also are sometimes hollowed out. Teeth are made of grains of rice, seeds from a gourd, bits of wood or even scraps of broken glass. Hair is

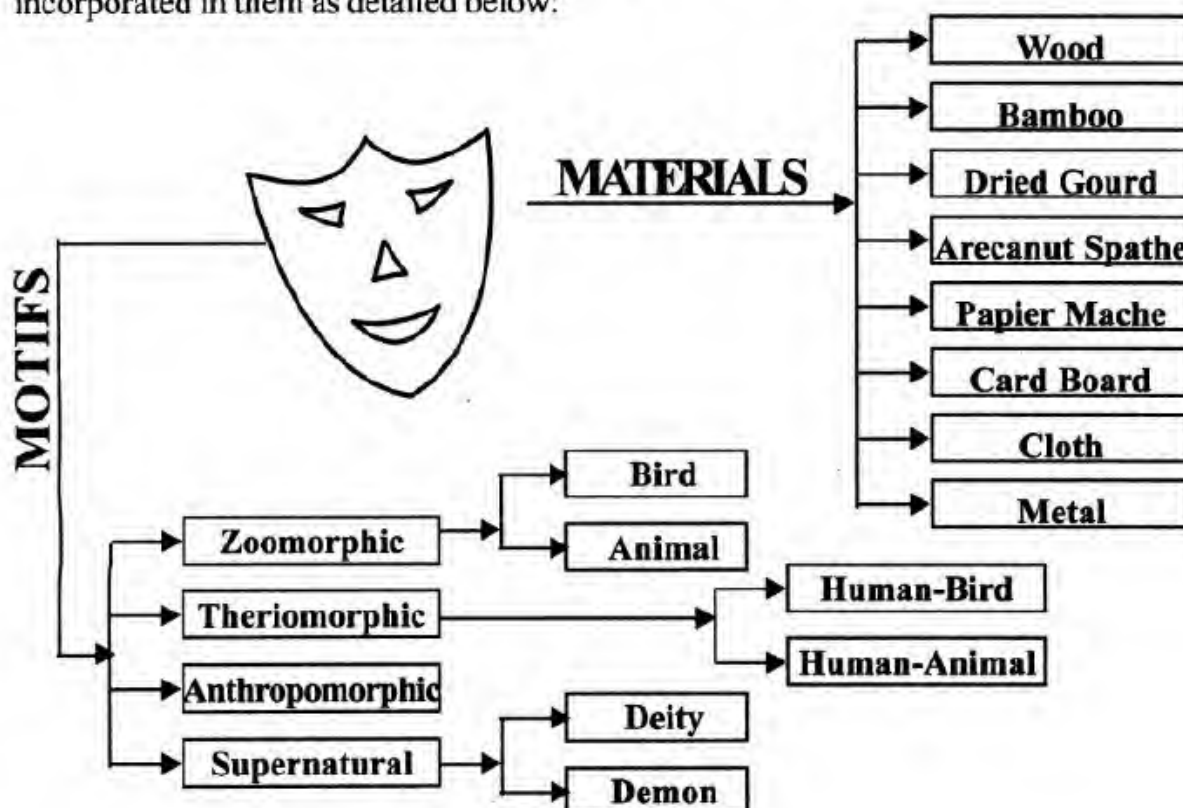


attached with beeswax and almost any available hair is used- from the horse, cow or goat-though bear's hair is preferred. If hair is not affixed lines are drawn over the top of the head or below the nose to suggest it" narrates Elwin, in describing a wooden mask (as quoted by U.C.Misra, 1990:68). Apart from this, iron or brass rings are fixed in ears and nose. In some of the eye holes of the masks, cowries or some circular rings were fixed. Some were shown with beard and moustache.

In tribal India, both 'zoomorphic' and 'anthropomorphic masks' are found connected with the 'ancestor worship'. Further, the masks assist to personify powerful spirits and to the awed onlookers, the wearer of the mask actually becomes the 'being' he represents. And the masks are used not only to personify invisible spirits or supernatural beings but even ordinary human beings to accentuate certain characteristics in the personality.

## 2.2 Classification of the Masks

Masks could be classified dichotomically based on the 'materials' and the 'motifs' incorporated in them as detailed below:



The details of the different masks that are used in tribal India have been presented in the following tables:

**TABLE-1 TRIBAL MASKS BASED ON THE MATERIALS USED**

S. No.	Material Used	Tribes and Provenance
1.	Wood	Lahula of Himachal Pradesh
2.	Bamboo	Maria of Madhya Pradesh
3.	Dried Gourd	Kuttia Khond of Orissa
4.	Arecanut Spathe	Kuruman of Kerala
5.	Papier Mache	Bhatra of Orissa
6.	Card Board	Bhatra of Orissa
7.	Cloth	Paniya of Tamilnadu
8.	Metal	Kinnauri of Himachal Pradesh

**TABLE - 2 TRIBAL MASKS WITH ZOOMORPHIC MOTIFS**

S.No.	Name of the Mask	Tribes and Provenance
1.	<i>Chidia</i> (Bird)	Bhatra of Orissa
2.	<i>Mor</i> (Peacock)	Bhatra of Orissa
3.	<i>Popat</i> (Bird)	Bhatra of Orissa
4.	<i>Bail</i> (Ox)	Bhatra of Orissa
5.	<i>Nayala Guram</i> (Horse)	Bagata / Jatapu of Andhra Pradesh
6.	<i>Hiran</i> (Deer)	Lahula of Himachal Pradesh
7.	<i>Genda</i> (Rhinoceros)	Bhatra of Orissa
8.	<i>Bagh</i> (Tiger)	Bhatra of Orissa
9.	<i>Sher</i> (Lion)	Muria of Madhya Pradesh
10.	<i>Jangli Kutta</i> (Dhole)	Bhatra of Orissa

**TABLE-3 TRIBAL MASKS WITH THERIOMORPHIC MOTIFS**

S.No.	Name of the Mask	Tribes and Provenance
1.	<i>Narsing</i> (Human-Lion)	Kinnauri of Himachal Pradesh
2.	<i>Vaali Sugraam</i> (Human-Monkey)	Kokna of Gujarat
3.	<i>Hanuman</i> (Human-Monkey)	Rajbansi of West Bengal
4.	<i>Sugrib</i> (Human-Monkey)	Rajbansi of West Bengal
5.	<i>Angad</i> (Human-Monkey)	Rajbansi of West Bengal
6.	<i>Jambuvan</i> (Human-Bear)	Rajbansi of West Bengal
7.	<i>Jataiyu</i> (Human-Eagle)	Rajbansi of West Bengal

**TABLE-4 TRIBAL MASKS WITH SUPERNATURAL MOTIFS**

S.No.	Name of the Mask	Tribes and Provenance
1.	<i>Kali</i> (Kali)	Rajbansi of West Bengal
2.	<i>Mashan Kali</i> (Mashan Kali)	Rajbansi of West Bengal
3.	<i>Chang Kali</i> (Chang Kali)	Rajbansi of West Bengal
4.	<i>Chamar Kali</i> (Chamar Kali)	Rajbansi of West Bengal
5.	<i>Chamunda</i> (Chamunda)	Rajbansi of West Bengal
6.	<i>Brahma</i> (Brahma)	Bhatra of Orissa
7.	<i>Gajanan</i> (Ganesh)	Bhatra of Orissa
8.	<i>Ashur</i> (Giant)	Bhatra of Orissa
9.	<i>Rakchas</i> (Demon)	Bhatra of Orissa

**TABLE - 5 TRIBAL MASKS WITH ANTHROPOMORPHIC MOTIFS**

<b>S.No.</b>	<b>Name of the Mask</b>	<b>Tribes and Provenance</b>
1.	<i>Rani</i> (Queen)	Bhatra of Orissa
2.	<i>Raja</i> (King)	Bhatra of Orissa
3.	— (Soldier)	Rajbansi of West Bengal
4.	<i>Taraka</i> (Taraka)	Rajbansi of West Bengal
5.	<i>Ravan</i> (Ravan)	Kinnauri of Himachal Pradesh
6.	<i>Mahi Ravan</i> (Mahi Ravan)	Kinnauri of Himachal Pradesh
7.	<i>Surpanakha</i> (Surpanakha)	Bhatra of Orissa

### **2.3 Mask as a Product of Myth-making Faculty of Mankind**

When exposed to both the 'benevolent' and the 'malevolent forces of nature' the mankind felt that the former (i.e., 'benevolent forces') that control it are due to the acts of deities (i.e., 'good spirits') and the latter that cause it are due to the acts of demons (i.e., 'evil spirits'). Thus, the mankind started creating myths and desperately tried to materialize both these supernatural forces so that, through appropriate rituals (which are nothing but the re-enactment of myths) the deities could be pleased and the evil spirits appeased. As a result, from such myth-creating faculty of mankind were born many idols, images and icons. Mask was born as a special kind of icon. In such a way, myths and masks exist as closely related with each other. As mentioned earlier, it is the myth-making faculty of mankind that gave shape and substance to the masks. Their magical character fades as the age of myth recedes. In short, we could say that in the realm of myth, the mask is a sign of revelation on the part of supernatural.

## **2.4 Mask as the Antennae of Supernatural Powers**

In primitive cultures, the mask is neither a symbol nor a metaphor but a tangible presence. Thus, for the primitive mankind, the myth is more intense reality and consequently, the mask is the 'antennae of supernatural powers'.

Put it in other words, when the primitive man put on the mask he was amazed at its magical powers because he could feel that a being, which was flowing in from the mask, took total possession of his body and mind. Therefore, he regarded the masks as the 'antennae of supernatural powers' and consequently as the very useful ritual objects.

## **2.5 Mask as an Object with Special Function**

Mask remains away from the public eyes for most of an year and taken out only during special occasions such as rituals, festivals. On such special occasions, the mask becomes inseparable from a ritual and accompanys the dance. A mask remains incomplete so long as the dancer has not contributed movements. Gestures of the masked priest/performer and the accompanying dancer(s) enhance their meaning further. This is one reason why a mask in isolation and away from its context seems to cease communicating (i.e., 'insignificant'). In other words, 'masks', the multivocal symbols of the primitive world become silent, the moment these artefacts are separated from their contextual use. However ornate they might appear on the walls and or on the museums or shelves, the masks lose their innate significance when divorced from their functional use. On the contrary, the tribal communities which observe the masking tradition believe that even when the ritual mask is not used it preserves some of its mysterious powers and therefore, it is usually kept in ceremonial place or destroyed immediately after the ritual is over.

Moreover, the mask is considered more than an object. That is, it is considered as a living character be it 'supernatural' or 'human' or 'animal' or 'bird'. It has to project its salient features to give meaning and purpose to the performance (i.e., 'masking tradition'). A traditional performance and the decorative arts involved



in 'mask' are not only the expressions of the creative spirit but together tell the story of a people's life, thoughts, values, beliefs and world-views.

## **2.6 General Description of the Masks**

'Grotesque', 'Comical', 'Fantastic', 'Mysterious', 'Serene' are not proper words for a description of a 'mask', as the meaning and the purpose of a depicted face in a mask go much beyond the surface quality and the imagination of an onlooker. Unfortunately, most of the meanings in masks remain unobtrusive, perhaps 'knowing a work of ritual art' means "onlooking the minds of the people practising it behind art as well".

The masks are something unfamiliar, not quite understood, but wonderfully crafted and yet endowed with such extraordinary life of their own. However, 'mask' is generally considered as the 'other face of mankind'. Consequently, it is conceived as a 'symbol' in ritual performance whereas it is construed as a 'metaphor' in modern theatre to suggest aesthetically the agony of modern man and as a 'protective covering' in utilitarian domains.

In the primitive cultures, the mask-makers use a variety of materials such as wood, bamboo, gourd, spathe, papier mache, card board, cloth, metal. Most of the masks in the primitive cultures are in one piece, but some have moving parts. Some are carved, others painted while some are both carved and painted. These masks also demonstrate a great range of colour scheme and design. In almost all types of masks that are in use in the primitive cultures, the headgear forms an integral part of the mask.

## **2.7 Rigid Masks Vs Pliant Masks**

The crafted masks are generally referred to as the 'rigid masks' in contradistinction to the mask-like facial decorations, the 'pliant masks'. The rigid masks can have a separate (i.e., 'independent') existence even when removed from the face. Contrary to this, the pliant masks cannot exist when they are removed from the face of

wearer since face is not only their foundation but also their integral part, which imparts the 'pliancy' to them. In short, a pliant mask is nothing but a highly stylized make-up which gives the face a 'mask-like appearance'.

## **2.8 Functions of the Masks**

A mask is a two-way traffic all the time: it sends a message in and projects a message out. It operates by the laws of echoes; if the echo-chamber is perfect, the sound going in and the one coming out are reflections; There is a perfect reflection between the echo chamber and the sound; but if it is not, it is like a distorted mirror.



## **III. MASK-MAKING AS A CRAFT**

### **3.1 General**

Masks that show directness of approach and elaborate fineness of details are the 'works of art' and their 'manufacturers' and 'users' are the 'artists'. However, in tribal mask-making the spirits of mountain, forest, river, in fact, everything important and of concern is taken into the human fold and consequently given a 'face'.

In tribal societies, the process of mask-making often involves ritual and participation of the entire community. Selection of a tree to craft a mask is a very elaborate and prolonged activity. The specialist carver of a mask has to withdraw from most of the economic chores and engage himself in mask-making for many months. During these periods of dedicated craftsmanship his fellow tribal folks of the hamlet look after his fields, cattle and family.

In tribal India, although all these cultural practices get changed now yet the 'masks' and their connected 'mimetic ritual dances' still exist in some form or other. Now-a-days, in some places the masks are rented out from one hamlet to other hamlet(s) as well, indicating the setting in of commercialisation of the masking tradition.

### **3.2 Materials used in Mask-Making**

Considering the tools and the materials that are used in the mask-making one by one each is seem to be an ingenious utilization of something from the local environment. Crafting a mask, as a process, takes place on two levels, viz., first, in the artist's mind and second, in the hands of the artist.

The simplest materials used by tribal artists for crafting (and thereby modelling) are wood, iron and clay. Their skill is more related with the power of control on the medium and stylization in the originality. However, in the mask-making there is less scope for carving as the masks are crafted by means of many diverged materials such as bamboo, arecanut spathe, papier mache, metal. That is why, the tribal artists colour it or decorate it with dots or stripes of colours. Not only this, in their masks they portray the legendary forms of males, females, animals, birds and other motifs. These motifs constitute certain sacred and mystical visual symbols that take the place of visual descriptions.

The tribal masks are generally illustrated or decorated with vibrant colours. First, the wood of which the mask has been made is smeared with clay and when this has dried, patterns are traced in black or red. Occasionally, instead of white they use black or red in the background. In most of the cases, they use white and red ochre colour for painting these masks. They make dots, lines and forms with red ochre on a white or light background.

## **IV. MASKING TRADITION : AN OVERVIEW**

### **4.1 General**

Among the societies, which are less technologically developed, the 'life cycle ceremonies' (popularly known as the 'rites of passage') and the 'seasonal ceremonies' (which are observed commemorating spring time and harvest) are of immense significance. Ritual costume is, therefore, of considerable importance and may involve prolonged preparation. One of the most widespread forms of ritual costume is the 'mask'.

### **4.2 Origin of Masks and Mask-wearing**

Nobody knows where and when the 'masks' originated. It seems probable that deep in the prehistoric past each primitive society developed its own masks to minimize the feeling of vulnerability. That is, the primitive mankind felt highly insecure and vulnerable when it was helplessly exposed to various phenomena of nature. Exploitations in the possibility of crafted face to mirror the inner feelings and the image of a conceptualized personality has always intrigued as well as interested the mankind. This gifted ability was invariably exploited in human cultures to shape 'specialized artefacts', namely, the 'masks'.

Some of the rock art, which survive from the Upper Palaeolithic Age show human figures wearing what appears to be animal heads. Consequently, it is believed that the custom of wearing masks probably began with animal heads being worn by people. The magical identification of the hunter with his prey 'by means of the mask' may have emerged from clever mimicry of an animal's posture and movements in order to lure it within the reach of hunting implement, viz., spear, arrow, boomerang.

Depictions in rock art suggest that the prehistoric hunters used 'masks' to establish contact with the forces of 'natural world', and 'supernatural world' as well. This sort of relationships was of oneness for existence. Interestingly, the traditions of mask-wearing exist in some parts of the world even today, especially the tribal world. For instance, the masks continue to play a vital role of communication in the religious and the social activities of many tribal societies. In these arenas, they serve as the 'container of spirits' and these spirits seem to take bizarre shapes drawn from dream situations (i.e., 'fantasies') which a 'mask-maker' experiences in the ritual process that is prolonged for days.

#### **4.3 Role of Masks in the Masking Tradition**

Primitive mankind believed that if the face is masked it becomes 'another face' and the body too becomes 'another body' since it feels a 'new being' flows in from the mask. That 'being' seizes upon the body and transforms it too so that there is no inconsistency between the 'new face' and the 'new body'. Thus, the 'mask' acts as an instrument of metamorphosis, especially when the mind is as impressionable as that of a primitive man.

Tribes who have been least influenced by the industrial civilization observe the masking tradition till date. Through the masks and the connected ritual process (i.e., 'masking tradition') the tribal people get in touch with both the 'natural' and the 'supernatural forces' and consequently, befriend them for a continued successful existence and the tribal people firmly believe that if not appeased and looked after effectively the same 'natural' and 'supernatural forces' will bring him misfortune.

According to the tribal people, the 'priests' or the 'performers' wearing the masks become the 'deities'. Here, a kind of double metamorphosis takes place. That is, first, the mask psychologically elevates the wearer to influence the supernatural powers to which he appeals and at the same time permits him to get transfigured; Then, he acquires the psychic substance from the supernatural powers and passes this on to the members of his community.

Masking tradition often accompanied by powerful music and solemn singing lead to the status of collective hysteria. Consequently, the participants believe that the ritual forces the supernatural powers to put in an appearance. In other words, the magic spell of the ritual is not limited to the wearers of mask alone; Rather all the participants of the ceremony feel the presence of the divine beings summoned by the magic power of the mask. In short, the 'mask' used in the 'masking tradition' does not duplicate the face of the mask-wearer; Rather, it vitally alters the face by accentuating or distorting the features and highlighting the qualities of dramatic character.

The masking tradition has been taking the fantasy to great height because the performers wear crafted masks. In other words, the masks help to heighten the fantasy of mythological world.

A fascinating kind of impersonality is acquired by the mask-wearers when he puts on a mask. Put it in other words, wearing a mask on his face gives the 'most extraordinary sense of liberation' to the performer because putting a mask on the face is a great moment: he suddenly find oneself immediately for a certain time liberated from one's own subjectivity. The awakening of body awareness is immediately there with it irresistibly.

#### **4.4 Purposes of the Mask-wearing**

Mankind cannot do away with the mask, because right from the earliest ritual the mask has always been a way of defying human vulnerability. Further, the mask not only protects but transforms, disguises and enhances the face as its mysterious double, the alter-ego,

The masks are used generally for three purposes. In ritual, it transforms both the 'face' of the mask-wearer and his 'self'; In theatre, contrary to this, it transforms not the 'self' but only the 'face' of the mask-wearer; In utilitarian purpose, it is used as a sheer protective covering.



Broadly speaking, in ritual sphere, the masks serve the purpose of an instrument for re-enactment of some elemental experience by projecting and reflecting supernatural powers; in the realm of theatre, the mask is then a means of stylized treatment of the actor's face; and in the utilitarian domain, the mask is stripped off its symbolic character and is used as a protective covering.

#### **4.5 Psychology behind the Mask-wearing**

As observed elsewhere, right from the earliest prehistoric and primitive rituals, the mask has always been conceived as a way of defying human vulnerability. Furthermore, the mask not only protects but transforms, disguises and enhances the face of the wearer as well. Moreover, the mask has ever been conceived as the unfailing companion of the human face as its mysterious double, namely, the alter-ego.

The masking tradition fascinates not only because it moves us by their impersonality but there are other deeper psychological reasons as well behind it. For instance, the human beings have a strong desire to escape the reality which the psychologists call 'wish fulfillment'. The power of masks of offering escape from reality through wish fulfillment is the secret of its surprisingly universal appeal which comes through identification, not with any one of the masks but with the masked performer. Through this identification the audience enjoys the same sensation of power and authority as the masked performer, though to a lesser degree.

**On the whole, the masking tradition helps to fulfill mainly three kinds of wishes:**

(i) Human beings wish to have power over others. It is the wish to make ourselves felt by controlling other destinies. Accordingly, the masked performer creates his masks and postulates his own world, where he behaves as a despot or deity.

(ii) The other wish is somewhat the same as that of a father who aspires to fulfill in his son what he has missed in life. Therefore, the masks often carry out such acts that we want to but cannot do; and

(iii) The wish to appear superior to others is no less strong in human beings. This is satisfied in the masking tradition mainly by observing the performance in such a way that the audience is puzzled and mystified by exposing the weaknesses of fellow human beings through cruel caricatures.

Further, the impulse of mankind to decorate is natural. Such 'psychic unity of mankind' might have resulted into the masking tradition.

#### **4.6 Mimetic Ritual Dances and the Masking Tradition**

In mimetic rituals, the masks are used to evoke the deities so as to protect the mankind from hostile environment so that diseases are warded off, sickness is cured, success in a hunt or war is secured and natural calamities and or crop failures are averted. Such mimetic masked rituals are often accompanied by vigorous dances, resulting in trance when the spirits are evoked and the mediums are in perfect communion.

The tribal communities which perform such mimetic masked rituals believe that even when the ritual mask is not used it preserves some of its mysterious powers and therefore, it is usually kept within the sacred space or destroyed immediately after the ritual is over.

#### **4.7 'Mask Dance' as a Magico-religious Practice**

Many magico-religious practices concerned with hunting are designed to generate the successful killing of animal being hunted. Some of these practices go back to the palaeolithic period and were recorded in the form of rock art depictions.

Often the hunter went through the hunting performances as a ritualistic dance, wearing some parts of the animals' skin. The imposing figure of such a mask dance dominates the rock art of Trois-Freres in France, where it seems to represent a great magician performing such holy rites with a deer's head and hyde on him.

The magical rites so splendidly depicted in the above cited palaeolithic rock art reveal that the sorcerer was harnessing a group effect for a difficult task by a group of ritual dancers.



#### **4.8 Masking Tradition in Tribal India**

Tribes, in general, believe that all things possess 'spirits'. Accordingly, they take into account not only the physical nature of objects but also their supernaturalness. Further, they believe that the world remain peaceful so long these spirits are in peace with each other. If this relationship among the various spirits is somewhat violated calamities, diseases, etc., befall on them. In order to remedy such violation they use to perform magico-religious ceremonies in which the masks play an important role in invoking the spirits, concerned.

The masking tradition prevails in different parts of the world. For instance, the 'Deer dance' of the Yaqui of Arizona is performed by the male dancer wearing a head-dress of a stuffed deer's head. The chief and the elders of the Bandjoun tribes in the Cameroon highlands perform the ritual dance of the 'Society of the elephant'. The beaded masks are believed to help them turn into elephants. The buffalo ceremonials are the rites honouring the animals that provide food and clothing to many American Indian tribes. For example, at Taos of North Mexico, a crowd of men wearing buffalo heads, swayed and pawed the earth like bison. And among the Pueblo Indians, men in buffalo masks dance beside a woman, the 'mother of game' who supposedly brought the animals to the hunters.

In tribal India, the masking tradition is prevalent in various States among the different tribal groups. For instance, the Lamas of Sikkim; the Lahulas of Kullu and the Kinnauris of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh; the Rajbansis of Jalpaiguri and West Dinajpur in West Bengal; the Koknas in Gujarat; the Santhals of Dhympka in Bihar; the Warlis in Maharashtra; the Bhils of Rajasthan; the Bison-Horn Marias of Tongpal in Madhya Pradesh; the Kuttia Khonds of Phulbani, the Koyas of Godavari and the Bhatras in Orissa; the Bagata / Jatapu in Andhra Pradesh; the Musaris and the Cherumans in Kerala; the Paniyas and the Irulas of the Niligris in Tamilnadu observe the masking tradition.

The tribal masks of Central India are popular in the adult and the children's festivals and dances. Normally, they are not visible but brought out on ceremonial

occasions. During the festive occasions such as 'Chherta/Khichrahi' festival, 'Laru-kaj' rite and marriage ceremony the Central Indian tribes wear or display their masks which are generally illustrated or decorated with colours.

The Baiga tribes generally make masks for the Chherta / Khichrahi festival of children. The children dress up as sadhus, wear make up and adorn masks. Contrary to this, the other Central Indian tribes like the Gonds, the Pardhans and the Agarias celebrate a complicated rite called the Laru-kaj. On other occasions, the Baiga boys put on masks and dance with the Baiga girls in memory of Krishna, milk-maids and Rakshasas. The Baiga tribes also display the masks at their marriage ceremonies.

The Gond and the Baiga masks are generally of the same type, either made in gourd or wood in a square or rectangular shape. In the Gond and the Baiga villages of Mandla District of Madhya Pradesh, many masks were made and decorated in pictographic style. Figures such as tigers, birds, snakes, centipedes, trees were drawn on cheeks and foreheads of the masks. These motifs bear neither any special meaning nor connection with a story; Rather, their purpose was apparently of purely decorative in nature. Consequently, these masks are conceived not only the specimens of wood work but good examples of collage painting as well. These masks are decorated with white, red and yellow ochre and black colours along with bear or horse hair, hemp and rice seeds and scraps of broken glass.

The Mahabharat and the Ramayan appear to be the most popular sources, in tribal India, from where to trace the characters depicted in the masks. For instance, during the 'Godavari' and the 'Chher-Chhera' dance drama of the Bhils of Rajasthan and the Bhatra-Porja of Orissa the elements from the respective traditions of the nearby non -tribes are observed as well, apart from the elements drawn from their respective indigenous tradition, resulting into artefacts peculiar to the stock of tribal cultures.

The Lamas of the Yang Sang Chu Valley in Northern Siang have mask dances which they perform every year at the week long festival of Drubachak to ensure

prosperity, happiness and health. They have 'Deer dance' and 'Pig dance', for which they wear striking masks and gorgeous costumes; Other pantomimes represent Kings, Queens, Demons and Clowns. The highly entertaining 'Arakacho-chham' originated when Lord Buddha saw how gloomy people were; and it is said that he sent Arakacho and his wife to cheer them up and the people began to laugh by visualizing the performance of the couple. The members of Gellong also perform similar dances.

Ritualistic mask dances are also performed by the Lamas in the monasteries of Western Himalayan region, especially in areas around Ladakh, Kinnaur and Dharmasala much similar to those performed in Arunachal Pradesh. The theme of these dances centres around the legend of Buddha which depicts the victory of the 'good' over the 'evil'. These dances are accompanied by musical chants. The costumes used in these mask dances are colourful and gorgeous. The awe and the fear inspiring the masks of demons and evil spirits are dramatically delineated. They are carved mostly from a single block of wood. And holes are usually, but not always, made for eyes. Further, they are painted with bright colours. Women never wear masks and they are used only by men and boys or the Lamas themselves.

Religious beliefs of some tribal communities have been influenced after their contact with people of other faiths. For instance, many of the tribes of Himachal Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh have come very close to either Buddhism or Hinduism or both. Of these, the tribes who have come very close to Buddhism have fascinating ritual mask dances.

The Sherdukpens and the Manpas of Arunachal Pradesh perform many kinds of ritual mask dances of which 'Thutatdam' is most fascinating. The performers put on masks representing skulls and wear costumes designed as skeletons. This ritualistic dance depicts how the soul is received in the other world. At Torgyap festival many such kinds of mask dances are performed which aim at driving away the evil spirits and ensuring prosperity, good harvest and favourable weather throughout the year.

The Manpas perform 'Arpas Dance' in which about 25 mask dancers, carrying sword and shield depict how their ancestors conquered their enemies. The performance concludes with dance called 'Galleon Chham' in which about 10 dancers perform a special kind of ritual dance, wearing highly colourful costumes and sumptuous masks. Of all the mask pantomimes that the Sherdukpens perform, the most fascinating is the 'Yak dance'. In this mimetic ritual dance, the dummy animal is formed by two men concealed behind a black cloth that forms its body. The head of the dummy yak is made of wood. On its back a figure of a deity is seated. Three masked men, representing the hero Apapek and his two sons dance around the dummy animal.

#### **4.9 The Bison Dance of the Central Indian Tribes: A Study in Cultural Survivals**

The Central Indian tribes like the Khonds and the Saoraś of Orissa; the Koyas of Andhra Pradesh; the Bison-Horn Marias and the Ghotul Murias of Madhya Pradesh were observing mainly the 'slash and burn cultivation' on the hill slopes. At that time, the bison herds used to spoil their crops by wandering on those plots while grazing; since the animals were relatively more stronger and massive the tribal people have sought the help of magico-religious rites before venturing into hunting expeditions.

So as to harness a collective consciousness and a group effort for such a difficult task the people started to enact a ritual dance. Further, having known the significance of masking tradition from time immemorial they started to wear masks in the shape of bison head during these dances. In course of time, even after the evasion of bison herds on hill slopes and adoption of settled cultivation, the tribal folk started to enact such ritualistic bison dance at the ceremonial hunting expeditions every year. At present, all the above cited Central Indian tribes observe the bison dance as a dance of their pass time (excepting the Koyas who are found to observe this bison dance as a dance of hunting rituals and pass times as well). In other words, the bison dance has been observed among all the above cited Central Indian Tribes (excepting the Koyas where



this dance is observed as a dance of hunting rituals as well as pass times) as a cultural survival without its past significance.

Although the Central Indian tribes like the Khonds and the Saoras of Orissa, the Bison-Horn Marias and the Ghotul Murias of Madhya Pradesh, the Koyas of Andhra Pradesh practise a mimetic dance known as the bison dance, the Bison-Horn Marias and the Ghotul Murias were observed to wear the 'masks of bison head' while other tribes cited in the above list were found to wear the 'headgears of bison head'. Hence, the bison dance of the Bison-Horn Marias and the Ghotul Murias alone could be classified as the 'true mask dances'.

#### **4.10 Stages in the Cultural Evolution of Masking Tradition**

A Cross-cultural study of the various masking traditions that are connected with the ritual dances suggests five stages of cultural evolution of masking tradition among the tribal people. They are as follows:

**Stage -I: Wearing animal hyde and head of the animal to be hunted.** e.g., (i) American Indian tribes wear fox's hyde and head while venturing for hunting; (ii) African Bushmen wear the hyde and head of the animal they attempt to hunt.

**Stage -II: Observance of mask dances with actual hyde and or head of the intended game, concerned.** e.g., ( i ) Deer dance of Yaqui of Arizona;& (ii) Bison dance of Pueblo Indians.

**Stage -III: Enacting mask dances only at the thanks-giving ceremonies.** e.g., ( i ) Taos of North Mexico;& ( ii) Sun dance of Pueblo Indians.

**Stage-IV: Performing of mask dance during hunting ritual and pass time.** e.g., Koyas of Andhra Pradesh.

**Stage-V: Observance of mask dance as dance of pass time.** e.g., (i) Khonds and Saoras of Orissa; & (ii) Bison-Horn Marias and Ghotul Murias of Madhya Pradesh.

#### **4.11 Reasons for increasing Obsolescence of Masking Tradition**

Increasing rational approach due to the onslaught of civilization went on eroding the belief system of people. And when the rationality made inroad into the domain of belief system and realism tend to invade the performing arts, the masks were the casualty; Consequently, they were discredited and scorned as an emblem of lies and seduction. The masks, consequently, get banished from the domain of belief system of the so-called civilized societies as it is being considered as an instrument of mankind's surrender to the forces of instinct and sorcery; Having exiled from the world of rational thinking, the masks and the masking tradition remain confined to the tribal cultures where myths still held their sway.

Even among the tribal cultures the masking tradition, now-a-days, is becoming obsolete due to culture contact and culture change with the impact of the neighbouring so-called civilized non-tribal communities.

#### **4.12 Masks and Masking Tradition in the Theatre**

As the masks are symbolic in form and construction, over the centuries these 'sculpted face coverings' have demonstrated the deepest fantasies of the artist in mankind and the enormous potency and authority as symbols not only in rituals and religious ceremonies but also in theatre.

The man who shaped the first mask in this world unknowingly gave birth to theatre simultaneously since it is defined as an enactment of a situation or a series of situations through assumption of one or more character. In short, the masking tradition could be defined as a kind of theatre with magico -religious or bizarre overtones.

To understand the multiform theatre of a country such as India, with its unbroken tradition of more than 5000 years, it is necessary to know the 'vocabulary' of its dramatic art. Consequently, the masks with the accompaniments of costume, make-up, jewellery and props help us to gain an insight into depth and amazing variety of theatre in India.



#### **4.13 Masks and Masking Tradition in the Present Society**

As civilization advanced, it was recognized that the masks not only do mystify but also do entertain and consequently, they started coming out of the religious domain and appeared before their audience as the entertaining elements. Neglecting the total ritualistic flair and entertaining elements, the so-called sophisticated urbanfolk display the masks in their drawing rooms as show pieces. In short, the masks are conceived in the contemporary world, not only as the unknown and mysterious symbols but as the elements of entertainment as well.

## **V. STUDYING MASKING TRADITION THROUGH THE PROCESSUAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES**

### **5.1 General**

The various culture traits of a culture complex are inter-related with one another. However, we should bear in mind that such relationships are not static (i.e., 'dialectical') ones; Rather, in the culture complex, they occupy alternately and continue their operation affecting each other.

Victor Turner, the proponent of the 'Processual Anthropology' (as quoted in Henry Julius, 2002:100) proposed the following four inter-related concepts to explain the dialectical relationships that exist between the dichotomical sets of culture traits within the culture complex., viz., the 'Supernature-oriented culture traits' and the 'Nature-oriented culture traits': (i ) The Concept of Liminality, (ii) The Concept of Communitus, (iii) The Concept of Pilgrimage, and (iv) The Concept of Marginality.

#### **5.1.1 The Concept of Liminality**

The major portion of human life occurs in 'nature-oriented' space and time. Whenever crisis emerges in the nature-oriented life style (i.e., 'Structure') leading to fear psychosis, the human beings tend to create an alternate structure (i.e., 'Anti Structure') of supernatural orientation to counter it. That is why, the 'Processual Anthropology' proposed by Victor Turner is also termed as the 'Theory of Structure-Anti Structure'.

The 'core' of a hamlet remains as the 'nature-oriented space' while its 'fringe' wherein the deities inhabit is construed as the 'supernature-oriented space'. The native people (whether male or female) who happened to cross this 'sacred space' from their original 'secular space' tend to show their reverence by removing their chappals or by tying towel on their hip.

Normally, rituals are observed in the 'supernatural space' or the 'sacred space'. The people enter this space with fresh hopes and expectations such as remedy from ailments, poverty. By creating such anti structures, people tend to get temporary relief from their crisis. The supernaturals who subject themselves into the observance of rituals lose their original space. In such a ritual-oriented space two significant developments occur, viz., first, people come in and have contact with sacred realities and later they derive rejuvenation through sacred mythifications, psychologically.

### **5.1.2 The Concept of Communitus**

The society that is constituted by the supernaturals, having come out of the nature-oriented society and re-assembling at the domain of ritual space, is termed the 'supernatural society'. The supernaturals by having contact with the sacred realities and sacred mythifications during the time of ritual observance attain a new status by way of obtaining a change in the status due to the ingress of something out of the vibrant creative changes. Victor Turner designates this 'something' as the 'supernatural society'. Such supernatural societies emerge in the supernatural space in various forms as anti structures.

### **5.1.3 The Concept of Pilgrimage**

When human beings experience crisis they tend to get temporary relief by leaving their relatively narrower nature-oriented space and enter into a comparatively broader supernatural-oriented space, which they have created. In this way such a newly created pilgrimage space exists as an anti space or anti structure to the nature-oriented space. Those who enter this broader space irrespective of their sex and or age (say menfolk,

womenfolk and children) emerge into the 'supernaturals' (and consequently into the 'super structure'), by gaining the supernatural feeling.

#### **5.1.4 The Concept of Marginality**

Each ritual is confined within the supernatural space and or the supernatural structure. Two contrasting polarities get developed as 'Core' Vs. 'Periphery' within this supernatural space. Both these polarities exert their characteristics in the supernatural space. The polarity of margin or periphery is nothing but the antagonistic or contrasting polarity to that of the one at the core. In other words, the polarity of margin or periphery has been introduced into the 'rigid ritual structure' so as to give a laxity. Consequently, the performances that are enacted or observed within the polarity of margin or periphery encompasses uncoded enactments or observances of the polarity of core. Accordingly, marginality has been formed and introduced in the ritual domain aiming to relieve the people from rigid ambience created by the polarity of core and to experience rejoicing.

#### **5.2 Mask-wearers as the 'Supernaturals'**

The mask-wearers differ from that of the people of the nature-oriented structure and emerge as a 'supernatural society' in the 'supernatural space'. Consequently, they were worshipped by the people of the nature-oriented society; In turn, the mask-wearers also bless them as and when approached.

At times, the mask-wearers are found to orient themselves in both the 'sacred space' and the 'secular space' as well. Whenever the mask-wearers enter the 'secular space' from that of the 'sacred space', they are realized as non-supernaturals and only when they enter the sacred space they are construed as 'supernaturals'. However, one should bear in mind that smoking, chit chating, etc., with fellowfolks and carrying the mask in hand casually are well avoided whenever the mask-wearers are moving within the supernatural space.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The masking tradition, in India, goes back to the prehistoric period, as evidenced from the depictions of mask-wearers in the rock art of Bhimbetka and Shamla Hills near Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh. To start with, the primitive people might have started to wear the head of the animals they have hunted and the hard rind of the gourd varieties such as pumpkin, bottle gourd. This hypothesis holds good as the tribal India till date is observed to exhibit matted bison-head like masks (incorporating original bison horns in them) among the Bison-Horn Marias of Madhya Pradesh and the pumpkin-like crafted masks amidst the Koknas of Gujarat, the Gonds and the Baigas of Madhya Pradesh; Interestingly enough, the Kutia Khonds of Orissa are found to wear a mask fashioned with bottle gourd itself even today.

However, we should bear in mind that in whatever way the mask is used-as a mythical presence, or as a symbol, or as a metaphor or as a mere protective covering-it could always be a way of defying human vulnerability.

As human beings are generally identified by their 'face', in primitive culture the men have resorted to the practice of wearing 'other faces', viz., the 'masks', to mask their 'original faces' (i.e., 'identities') and thereby transform themselves into 'other beings' (namely, the 'deities'/ 'demons'/ 'humans'/ 'animals'- as the case may be), depending upon the role played by them in the 'supernatural -oriented society' (i.e., 'sacred society') in contradistinction to the 'nature-oriented society' (i.e., 'secular society').

The mask is believed to be the abode of spirits (both 'good' and 'evil spirits') and thus it becomes the 'mana'/ 'bonga'. Consequently, it elevates the weaver who is



an ordinary folk as the 'other being'-based on the theory of imitative / homeopathic/ sympathetic magic, viz., "Like produces like".

In accordance with the general practice of the tribal society of adducing 'status', according to the 'role' undertaken, the mask-wearers are realized of their due 'status' as per the value of the face they represent. For instance, the person who happens to wear the mask of a deity in the 'sacred space' will be regarded as the 'deity', irrespective of his original status in the 'secular space'. In other words, the tribal people believe that the mask-wearer gets transformed to the status of a deity if he wears a mask representing that deity.

Further, in tribal India the masks are venerated and thus revered even after the culmination of the masking tradition. Consequently, they are stored within sacred spaces such as shrine; Or else, the storehouse of the mask(s) is started to be regarded as the 'sacred space'. One could realize that here the second theory of primitive magic, namely, the theory of contagious magic, viz., "Once in contact will always be in contact" is getting operated.

The tribal people of India, cutting across their religious faith, are observed to adopt the masking tradition. For instance, the Lamas of Western Himalayan region who adhere Buddhism till date observe the masking tradition. However, we should bear in mind that such contact with the so-called higher religions resulted into the admixture of the elements of alien tradition into the indigenous traditional matrix of tribal India. Such kind of tendency is perceptible in the case of masking tradition of Indian tribes as well.

Poverty cannot curtail the aesthetic temperament of the tribal people. This is evident from the use of all sorts of locally available raw materials by the tribes to craft the masks of their choice and requirement. For instance, the tribal masks were crafted out even out of simple plant materials such as 'spathe', 'bark', 'bottle gourd', 'bamboo', 'wood'.



As the masking tradition faces obsolescence, the prime constituent elements of it, viz., the 'masks' tend to take refuge in the shelves of museums and allied cultural institutions. Now-a-days, they become the most lovable guests in the drawing rooms of the urbanites as 'ornate wall decorations'. Even visual media such as cinema, advertising agencies started to incorporate the masks within their realms. For example, the English cinema entitled, "Mask" was a box office hit; Interestingly enough, even it became popular in the Rural India as well, having dubbed in regional languages. Likewise, the Saber Pen Company has released a set of 5 micro-tip pens as 'designer collection' on the focal theme of "Mask" some years ago.

This present monograph cannot be claimed as an exhaustive one as it contains certain lacunae, which warrant further research towards those shady and dark spots. For instance, there seems to be a taboo prevailing within tribal India of not allowing the womenfolk to be the mask-wearers but only as sheer co-performers. As probing of the reason behind it was beyond the scope of this present work, no attempt has been made to unravel it. Triballorists who venture to study the tribal masking tradition, further, in future could throw some lights over this shady arena. Furthermore, although the author was informed of the prevalence of masking tradition among certain Nilgiri tribes like the Irulas of Siriyur and the Paniyas of Gudalur, it was not possible for him to verify the details. A further research venture, in future, in this direction would be appreciated well.

## **APPENDIX-I**

### **\*CATALOGUE OF TRIBAL MASKS STUDIED**

1. Accession Number : 83.201  
Local Name : -  
English Equivalent : Mask of Konche-Ngdorza  
Ethnic Group : -  
Locality : -  
Location : Sikkim

This is an ornate wooden mask referred to as Konche-Ngdorza used (? by the Lamas) at Sikkim. In this mask, the nostrils alone were shown as pores. Further, although mouth is carved as a shallow depression with dentition on both the jaws no pore was depicted. A spectacular ear ornament adorns this mask. The characteristic crown that was carved as part of the mask gives the clue that its forerunner might have been a pumpkin on whose blue print this type of mask was crafted.

- 2 .. Accession Number : 83.202  
Local Name : -  
English Equivalent: : Mask of Maha Kala  
Ethnic Group : -  
Locality : -  
Location : Sikkim

This wooden mask known as Maha Kala is in utility at Sikkim (? among the Lamas). On the crest of the mask, motifs of skull with serpentine hoods were shown as added decorations. Eyes were carved as bas-relief depictions with a powerful stroke of thick eye brows having wavy incisions. A vertically depicted third eye at the centre of the forehead gives a ferocious appearance to the mask. Nostrils were shown as pores while nose was designed exquisitely. The open mouth was shown as a pore, leaving gaps on both the sides with rows of teeth on both the jaws with a centrally depicted tongue. Ear lobes were shown as distended parts. All the above depictions resulted into a grotesque mask.

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\*The select photographs of the tribal masks can be viewed in Appendix - II with reference to the corresponding serial numbers between pages 75 and 84.

3. Accession Number : 83.203  
Local Name : -  
English Equivalent : Mask of Lama dance  
Ethnic Group : Lama Tribes  
Locality : -  
Location : Sikkim

This wooden mask is used by the Lamas of Sikkim. In this mask, the nose was shown as a bas-relief depiction. The eyes were shown as pores. The characteristic wrinkles depicted on the forehead, cheek and chin give an odd look to this mask. A set of four teeth as protrusions from the jaws and the extended ear lobes add ferocious overtones as well to the mask.

4. Accession Number : 83.204  
Local Name : -  
English Equivalent : Mask of a deity  
Ethnic Group : -  
Locality : -  
Location : Sikkim

This ornate wooden mask of a deity is in use (? among the Lamas) at Sikkim. Here, the third eye was shown vertically at the centre of the forehead. Upon the crest of the mask, a skull motif was also depicted as a central projection. Nose was shown as a bas-relief depiction with hollow nostrils. To symbolise ferocious nature the nose was painted in pink colour with red dots at its tip. Mouth cavity was crafted as hollow structure. Teeth were shown as extensions from upper and lower mouth cavities with a centrally depicted tongue. The rim of the oral cavity was also painted in pink.

5. Accession Number : 85.217  
Local Name : Nakta  
English Equivalent : Mask  
Ethnic Group : Bhatra Tribes  
Locality : Bastar  
Location : Madhya Pradesh

In this wooden mask known as *Nakta* among the Bhatra tribes of Bastar in Madhya Pradesh, the turban was carved meticulously, exhibiting all possible folds and thereby it becomes a decoration to the mask. Eyes were shown as pores. The elongated nose was carved as bas-relief depiction. Lips were carved so naturally. Moustache was shown as upright curved one. In short, the mask exhibits an excellent workmanship of woodcarving.

6. Accession Number : 85.218  
 Local Name : Nakta  
 English Equivalent : Mask  
 Ethnic Group : Muria Tribes  
 Locality : Narayanpur  
 Location : Madhya Pradesh

In this ceremonial wooden mask of Muria tribes, the eyes are represented as mere pores. The nose was depicted as a bas-relief. An array of protruding front teeth was shown by chips of base silver. Further, a set of ear rings of base silver adorns the ears. A small bunch of hair (? of animal origin) was inserted into the grooves of the chin to represent beard.

7. Accession Number : 85.219  
 Local Name : Nakta  
 English Equivalent : Mask  
 Ethnic Group : Bison-Horn Maria Tribes  
 Locality : Tongpal  
 Location : Madhya Pradesh

This is a wooden mask of the Bison-Horn Maria tribes and known as *Nakta*. In this mask, the eyes were shown as square pores while the mouth was shown as rectangular pore. On the contrary, the nose was depicted as bas-relief. This mask was conceived as a significant one as its contour suggests that the crafting of this sort of mask might have been evolved out of pumpkin.

8. Accession Number : 87.264  
Local Name : Narsing  
English Equivalent : Narsing  
Ethnic Group : Kokna Tribes  
Locality : -  
Location : Gujarat

In this wooden mask referred to as *Narsing* by the Kokna tribes, the crest portion remains uncarved. Likewise, the protruding tongue was also shown uncarved. A set of teeth was shown as projecting chips on both the jaws within the carved open mouth. Here, the face was depicted aesthetically with sun-like eyes and dots of silver, green and red in the arena below the nose.

9. Accession Number : 87.265  
Local Name : Ravan Nee Bahmi Asaadi  
English Equivalent : Ravan as the pseudo-sage  
Ethnic Group : Kokna Tribes  
Locality : -  
Location : Gujarat

This wooden mask of the Kokna tribes of the Gujarat depicts *Ravan* as the pseudo-sage. Its crest was designed ornately. Eye balls were shown in a relatively bigger size. The broad nose was depicted with nostrils in the sideways. In the oral cavity, the teeth were depicted as projecting chips from the upper jaw. And the protruding tongue was coloured in blood red.

10. Accession Number : 87.266  
Local Name : Agiya-Elandi  
English Equivalent : Agiya-Elandi  
Ethnic Group : Kokna Tribes  
Locality : -  
Location : Gujarat

This is a relatively bigger sized wooden mask and known as *Agiya-Elandi* by the Kokna tribes. Its face was smeared with mud and cow dung, probably to mask its wood colouration. Here, the mouth was shown as pore.



11. Accession Number : 87.267  
 Local Name : Vaali-Sugraam  
 English Equivalent : Vaali-Sugraam  
 Ethnic Group : Kokna Tribes  
 Locality : -  
 Location : Gujarat

This wooden mask of the Kokna tribes of Gujarat depicts the *Vaali-Sugraam*. Its crest was depicted as a headgear or crown. While its forehead, eyes, rim of the oral cavity and protruding tongue were all painted in deep red colour, its nose, chin and upper lip were painted in dark green colour. Such contrasting bands of deep red and dark green gives this mask an attractive appearance. Dentition was shown on both the jaws as array of teeth. Both the contour and the colouration of this mask also gives an indication that the crafting of such masks might have been evolved from that of the pumpkin.

12. Accession Number : 87.268  
 Local Name : Ethoba-Rukmaiya  
 English Equivalent : Ethoba-Rukmaiya  
 Ethnic Group : Kokna Tribes  
 Locality : -  
 Location : Gujarat

This wooden mask known as *Ethoba-Rukmaiya* is used by the Kokna tribes of Gujarat. And this mask consists of the deities *Ethoba* and *Rukmai* for the *Bhavada dance*. While *Ethoba* was painted mostly in black (excepting its conical cap, upraised moustache and legs) *Rukmai* was painted mostly in white (excepting its eyes and mouth). Thus, this contrast in colours highlights these deities, which were crafted very crudely. A rectangular portion at the lower extremity of this mask which serves as the pedestal for these deities form a temple tower-like structure. The inner cavity of these bas-relief images serves to mask the face of the wearer.



13. Accession Number : 87.269  
Local Name : Popat  
English Equivalent : Parakeet  
Ethnic Group : Kokna Tribes  
Locality : -  
Location : Gujarat

This wooden mask of the parakeet is known as *popat* among the Kokna tribes of Gujarat. In this colourful mask, head was coloured in green, beak in red, eye ball in black with its rim in red. The inner side of the head portion was carved as hollow while the beak portion was uncarved and left as flat.

14. Accession Number : 87.270  
Local Name : Pundalik Bhagat  
English Equivalent : Pundalik Bhagat  
Ethnic Group : Kokna Tribes  
Locality : -  
Location : Gujarat

This wooden mask known as *Pundalik Bhagat* is in vogue among the Kokna tribes of Gujarat. This mask depicts a male person upto belly. The crest of the mask was shown as a characteristic cap with wavy, undulating rim in red colouration. Nose was depicted as a broad bulbous structure in black colour. Lips and inner ear lobes were painted in red. The pair of fore limbs in dark pink were shown touching the hip on both the sides. In the centre of the forehead, vaishnavite mark was drawn in red colour. The central trunk portion was shown, wearing a sleeveless shirt. While the hand portion was painted in red the finger nails were shown as white tips. The ultimate portion of the mask depicts the beginning of the hip portion.

15. Accession Number : 87.271  
Local Name : Durga Devi  
English Equivalent : Durga Devi  
Ethnic Group : Kokna Tribes  
Locality : -  
Location : Gujarat

This is a wooden mask referred to as *Durga Devi* by the Kokna tribes of Gujarat. A miniature female figure without legs form the contour of this mask. The lower portion depicting the petticoat was carved into a hollow structure so as to wear it over the head by the mask-wearer. The nose was depicted as bas-relief while the mouth was depicted as horizontal slit. While the pair of hands attached to the wooden figure of this mask forms the fore limbs of the deity the mask-wearer substitutes his legs as that of its hind limbs.

16. Accession Number : 89.152  
 Local Name : Tala Kummati  
 English Equivalent : Tala Kummati  
 Ethnic Group : Musari Tribes  
 Locality : Trichur  
 Location : Kerala

This is a wooden mask designated as *Tala Kummati* by the Musari tribes of Trichur in Kerala. In this meticulously carved mask, the hair dress was shown as a central hair bun with nicely groomed hair. The pupils of the eye were shown as pores in the centre of the iris. While the iris was painted in black colouration the eye balls were depicted in white. Ear lobes were shown as dilated structures with elongated downward holes. The oral cavity, lined with red coloured lips was shown as a horizontal slit having irregular dentition with marked gaps so as to reveal loss of many teeth. The nose was shown with elongated nose bridge that ends in broad bulbous structure. While the face was painted in pink, the hair bun, the eye brows and the eye lashes were painted in contrasting black.

17. Accession Number : 89.154  
 Local Name : Kattalan  
 English Equivalent : Kattalan  
 Ethnic Group : Musari Tribes  
 Locality : Trichur  
 Location : Kerala

This wooden mask of *Kattalan* is used by the Musari tribes of Trichur in Kerala for the 'Kummati ritual'. This mask is painted in contrasting black (for hair bun, eye brows, eye lashes, moustache and beard) and red (for face, nose and ear lobes). Interestingly, the vaishnavite mark on the forehead was painted in pink colour so as to highlight it over the red background (of the forehead). While the eye balls were painted in white the pupils were painted in contrasting black. Likewise, while the upraised moustache and the trimmed beard were shown in black, the dentition as distinct rows of teeth on both the jaws were depicted in contrasting white. The oral cavity was shown as a vertical slit. And the eyes were depicted as protruberances.

18. Accession Number : 90.97  
Local Name : Mukhota Rakchas  
English Equivalent : Mask of Demon  
Ethnic Group : Muria Tribes  
Locality : Bastar  
Location : Madhya Pradesh

This wooden mask is known as *Mukhota Rakchas* and in use among the Muria tribes of Bastar in Madhya Pradesh. It is highly decorative to look into, with gold and other coloured decorative plates. The prognathous jaw and a pair of fang teeth could be seen from the side view of this mask.

19. Accession Number : 90.170  
Local Name : Bell Mukhotu  
English Equivalent : Mask of Bull  
Ethnic Group : Muria Tribes  
Locality : Bastar  
Location : Madhya Pradesh

This is a mask of a bull known as *Bell Mukhotu* and used by the Muria tribes of Bastar in Madhya Pradesh. Being a mask of papier mache it was attempted to add richness to this simple mask by painting it with different vibrant colours. For instance, the pair of horn was painted in black, mouth in red and neck band in alternative

stripes of black and red. This mask was fashioned with neck so as to wear easily by the mask-wearer.

20. Accession Number : 91.2109  
 Local Name : Mapar Char  
 English Equivalent : -  
 Ethnic Group : Rabha Tribes  
 Locality : Jalpaiguri  
 Location : West Bengal

This mask of the Rabha tribes of Jalpaiguri in West Bengal is known as *Mapar Char*. This was depicted with a prognathous jaw and a wide open mouth. While the mouth has been lined with red colour, the body of the mask was painted in white. The eye balls were painted in white whereas the pupils and the eye brows were painted in black.

21. Accession Number : 91.2111  
 Local Name : Mahi Ravan  
 English Equivalent : Mahi Ravan  
 Ethnic Group : Rajbansi Tribes  
 Locality : Jalpaiguri  
 Location : West Bengal

This wooden mask of *Mahi Ravan* was in use among the Rajbansi tribes of Jalpaiguri in West Bengal. A crown crafted meticulously forms the crest of the mask. This was painted in aluminium white. Contrary to this, the remaining part of the mask was painted in black. Lips were painted in red, showing an array of teeth painted in white and the pupils in black, the inner linings of the eye was painted in red and white, one after other.

22. Accession Number : 91.2112  
 Local Name : Megunad  
 English Equivalent : Megunad  
 Ethnic Group : Rajbansi Tribes  
 Locality : Jalpaiguri  
 Location : West Bengal

This wooden mask representing *Megunad* is used by the Rajbansi tribes of Jalpaiguri in West Bengal. The crest of the mask was crafted in the form of a cap showing characteristic floral designs painted in contrasting colour schemes of red, yellow and white. The remaining portion of the mask was painted mostly in blue (excepting the eyes, the moustache and the mouth). The eye balls and the dentition were painted in white while the eye lashes, the lips and the oral cavity were painted in red. The moustache and the eye brows in bas-relief were painted in black. The pupils (of the eyes) were also painted in black. Interestingly, the craftsman showed another pair of eye brows in red, probably having missed to notice the bas-relief eye brows in black colouration.

23. Accession Number : 91.2113  
 Local Name : Nikasha  
 English Equivalent : Nikasha  
 Ethnic Group : Rajbansi Tribes  
 Locality : Jalpaiguri  
 Location : West Bengal

This wooden mask of Rajbansi tribes of Jalpaiguri in West Bengal is referred to as *Nikasha*. The cheek and the nose were depicted in bas-relief while the ear lobes were crafted as projections on both sides. A small portion of the crest of the mask was painted in black to represent the hair. Likewise, the black colouration was painted around the eyes to represent both eye brows and eye lashes. A central black dot on white oval portion was used to designate the pupil and the eye ball. A red outline was painted around the eyes. The lips and the tilak on the forehead were painted in red.

24. Accession Number : 91.2114  
 Local Name : Khetua  
 English Equivalent : Khetua  
 Ethnic Group : Rajbansi Tribes  
 Locality : Jalpaiguri  
 Location : West Bengal



The Rajbansi tribes of Jalpaiguri in West Bengal use this mask. In this wooden mask a small cap was depicted on its crest portion. A pair of side projections represent the ear lobes. The eye brows, the eyes and the moustache were all painted in unrealistic yellow colour. A vertically drawn yellow outline in oval shape with a central white band designates the third eye. The cheeks, the nose and the chin were depicted as bas-relief projections. Interestingly, the eye ball and the pupil drawn over the left eye were not drawn centrally but at the uppermost corner. In the oral cavity, rows of dentition were shown in white while the lips and the tongue (shown inwardly) were painted in red.

25. Accession Number : 91.2115  
 Local Name : Hanuman  
 English Equivalent : Hanuman  
 Ethnic Group : Rajbansi Tribes  
 Locality : Jalpaiguri  
 Location : West Bengal

This wooden mask of *Hanuman* is used by the Rajbansi tribes of Jalpaiguri in West Bengal. And in this mask, the head hair, the eye brows, the eye lashes and the snout were painted in black in contrast to the red background of the mask. The mouth and the teeth arrangement were shown in the snout area itself, by painting a small patch in pink and white. The small ear lobes and a very elongated nose in bas-relief reveal the hominoid features distinctively. The eye brows, the eye lashes and the pupils were shown in black with white eye ball.

26. Accession Number : 91.2116  
 Local Name : Kali  
 English Equivalent : Kali  
 Ethnic Group : Rajbansi Tribes  
 Locality : Jalpaiguri  
 Location : West Bengal

This wooden mask of *Kali* is found among the Rajbansi tribes of Jalpaiguri in West Bengal. Its crest was crafted as a crown in red colour. A third eye was depicted



as a vertical structure in the centre of the forehead. The eye brows were painted in red colour. The fang teeth, the eye balls and the dentition alone were painted in white. A protruding tongue in red colour gives a ferocious look to this mask of Kali. A characteristic motif of two rows of white dots with a central row of red dots which runs from the forehead to the cheeks adds beauty to this mask. Ear lobes were crafted in a unique shape and in a unique way where the right lobe faces upwards unlike the left lobe facing downwards. The black & red contrast of this mask adds an aesthetic beauty to it.

27. Accession Number : 91.2117  
 Local Name : Jambuwan  
 English Equivalent : Jambuwan  
 Ethnic Group : Rajbansi Tribes  
 Locality : Jalpaiguri  
 Location : West Bengal

This wooden mask of *Jambuwan* is observed in utility among the Rajbansi tribes of Jalpaiguri in West Bengal. The shape of bear head was crafted so aesthetically in this mask, by presenting a characteristic long snout as its major portion.

28. Accession Number : 91.2118  
 Local Name : -  
 English Equivalent : Soldier  
 Ethnic Group : Rajbansi Tribes  
 Locality : Jalpaiguri  
 Location : West Bengal

This wooden mask of soldier is in use among the Rajbansi tribes of Jalpaiguri in West Bengal. The very shape of this wooden mask suggests that previously such masks might have been crafted out of pumpkin. The entire facial region of this mask was painted in yellow. Its crest was painted in black to show the hair. Likewise, the eye brows, the eye lashes and the pupils were painted in black. The inner portion of eye lids and lips were depicted in red colour while the eye balls and the dentition were painted in white. Nose alone was shown as a bas-relief structure. Interestingly, the ear lobes are wanting in this mask.

29. Accession Number : 91.2119  
 Local Name : Sugrib  
 English Equivalent : Sugrib  
 Ethnic Group : Rajbansi Tribes  
 Locality : West Dinajpur  
 Location : West Bengal

The wooden mask of *Sugrib* is used by the Rajbansi tribes of Jalpaiguri in West Bengal. While the ear lobes were carved as small projections the nose was crafted as bas-relief. A pair of eyes was drawn below the supra-orbital ridge. And a pair of eye brows was drawn above the supra-orbital ridge. The crest of the mask was painted in black. The rim of the mouth was painted in red, showing rows of teeth within it in white. And the two rows of teeth were separated by a horizontal bond of red, representing the mouth.

30. Accession Number : 91.2120  
 Local Name : Shiknidhal  
 English Equivalent : -  
 Ethnic Group : Rajbansi Tribes  
 Locality : Jalpaiguri  
 Location : West Bengal

This wooden mask of Rajbansi tribes of Jalpaiguri in West Bengal is termed locally as *Shiknidhal*. The pupil of the eye was shown as pore. A distinctly carved nose as bas-relief was provided with a pair of nostrils. The crest of the mask was crafted meticulously to designate an ornate crown. A characteristic moustache twisted in a peculiar shape was painted in white. Between the rows of dentition in white a tongue was also shown. A pair of fang teeth was depicted on both the ends of the mouth.

31. Accession Number : 91.2121  
 Local Name : Chamunda  
 English Equivalent : Chamunda  
 Ethnic Group : Rajbansi Tribes  
 Locality : West Dinajpur  
 Location : West Bengal

This wooden mask, which represents the deity *Chamunda* is observed among the Rajbansi tribes of West Dinajpur in West Bengal. A crown of peculiar shape was crafted and painted in alternating loops of pink and black. On the contrary, while the lower portion of the mask was painted in red colour its central portion was painted in pink colour. A third eye of vertical structure was painted in red and black at the centre of the forehead. An ear lobe in the shape of conch or mango is wanting in the right side. A protruding tongue in red and row of dentition in white depicted at the oral region gives a ferocious appearance to this mask.

32. Accession Number : 91.2122  
 Local Name : Hanuman  
 English Equivalent : Hanuman  
 Ethnic Group : Rajbansi Tribes  
 Locality : West Dinajpur  
 Location : West Bengal

The mask of *Hanuman* is found in utility among the Rajbansi tribes of West Dinajpur in West Bengal. The contour of this wooden mask suggests that this might have been crafted originally out of pumpkin. Painted in contrasting black (at the crest) and red (at the face), this mask exists as an attractive artefact. A pair of small projection as ears, a pair of sunken eyes and a triangular nose in bas-relief confirms the hominoid features of this mask. Apart from the forehead, the vaishnavite mark was also found over the nose.

33. Accession Number : 91.2123  
 Local Name : Bagh Mashan  
 English Equivalent : Tiger  
 Ethnic Group : Rajbansi Tribes  
 Locality : West Dinajpur  
 Location : West Bengal

This wooden mask locally designated as *Bagh Mashan* is observed among the Rajbansi tribes of West Dinajpur in West Bengal. Painted mostly in red, this mask bears a pair of up turned ear lobes. Nose was depicted as a triangular bas-relief

structure. The oral cavity was shown horizontally with rows of teeth in white (with red at the tips) on both the jaws with a centrally placed tongue in red. The striations typical of a tiger was also shown in the mask.

34. Accession Number : 91.2126  
 Local Name : Angad  
 English Equivalent : Angad  
 Ethnic Group : Rajbansi Tribes  
 Locality : West Dinajpur  
 Location : West Bengal

This wooden mask representing *Angad* is used by the Rajbansi tribes of West Dinajpur in West Bengal. A characteristic crown painted in alternating bands of green, red and yellow gives a colourful appearance to this mask. As in the case of the mask of Hanuman (bearing the Accession Number 91.2122), an additional vaishnavite mark was also painted over the triangular nose in bas-relief, apart from the one at its forehead. The inner ear lobes were painted in red. The facial region of the mask was painted in yellow. The eye balls were carved as a pair of projected balls within sunken structures.

35. Accession Number : 91.2127  
 Local Name : Taraka  
 English Equivalent : Taraka  
 Ethnic Group : Rajbansi Tribes  
 Locality : West Dinajpur  
 Location : West Bengal

This wooden mask of *Taraka* is observed among the Rajbansi tribes of West Dinajpur in West Bengal. The crest of the mask was painted in black to represent hair. The facial region which was painted basically in yellow colour was also given with red shade to give a ferocious look. The wide open mouth was shown with two rows of teeth on both the jaws. A pair of elongated fang teeth was depicted on both the corners of the mouth in white colour, of course with red on the root and the tip as well. A *tilak* in red colour was shown at the centre of the forehead. Eyes were depicted as bigger structures with big eye balls and big pupils.

36. Accession Number : 91.2128  
Local Name : Jataiyu  
English Equivalent : Jataiyu  
Ethnic Group : Rajbansi Tribes  
Locality : West Dinajpur  
Location : West Bengal

This wooden mask representing *Jataiyu* is used by the Rajbansi tribes of West Dinajpur in West Bengal. This mask was fashioned in such a way to resemble a bird's beak and neck. The two halves of the beak were demarcated by a groove painted in red colouration to show the wide open mouth. A pair of eyes were depicted on each side of the mask. The neck region was differentiated from the beak by line and motifs in yellow. Interestingly, a third eye was painted vertically in between the eyes to reveal the supernatural powers of *Jataiyu*.

37. Accession Number : 91.2129  
Local Name : Kumbakarna  
English Equivalent : Kumbakarna  
Ethnic Group : Rajbansi Tribes  
Locality : West Dinajpur  
Location : West Bengal

This mask of *Kumbakarna* is found prevalent among the Rajbansi tribes of West Dinajpur in West Bengal. In this wooden mask, the crest was fabricated to show not only a multicoloured head band but a pair of horns as well. The entire mask was painted in black (excepting the head band the eye balls in white, the lips and the protruding tongue in deep red and the dentition in white). The protruding tongue, the eyes in red background and the pair of horns were aimed to give a ferocious appearance to the onlookers. The nose and the moustache were depicted as bas-relief structures.

38. Accession Number : 91.2130  
Local Name : Mashan Kali  
English Equivalent : Mashan Kali  
Ethnic Group : Rajbansi Tribes  
Locality : West Dinajpur  
Location : West Bengal



The Rajbansi tribes of West Dinajpur in West Bengal use this mask of *Mashan Kali*. The crest of this wooden mask was fashioned as a characteristic crown. This was delineated and separated from the rest of the mask by lining of dots. The ear lobes instead of projected ones were depicted as bas-relief structures. The nose which also was fabricated as bas-relief structure was shown with a unique design of dots on the left side to express the nose rings. The eye brows, the eye lashes and the lips were highlighted by linings of dots. The mouth, as a horizontal slit, was guarded by a single row of teeth on the upper jaw.

39. Accession Number : 91.2131  
 Local Name : Chamar Kali  
 English Equivalent : Chamar Kali  
 Ethnic Group : Rajbansi Tribes  
 Locality : West Dinajpur  
 Location : West Bengal

This wooden mask of *Chamar Kali* is used by the Rajbansi tribes of West Dinajpur in West Bengal. The entire mask was crafted in an elongated manner and thereby a slender contour was achieved. The mask in pink colour was bestowed with a pair of twisted and up turned pair of horns that ends in red tips. The upper crest of the mask was fashioned in a peculiar way and coloured in green with lines of downward yellow dots. The nose was depicted as a slender, cylindrical structure extending downward, masking the teeth and to an extent the protruding long and broad tongue painted in red. An extraneous structure was also shown from the centre of the forehead extending upwards. Interestingly, a moustache in black was depicted in this mask of 'Kali', a female deity.

40. Accession Number : 91.2132  
 Local Name : Chang Kali  
 English Equivalent : Chang Kali  
 Ethnic Group : Rajbansi Tribes  
 Locality : West Dinajpur  
 Location : West Bengal

This wooden mask of *Chang Kali* is observed among the Rajbansi tribes of West Dinajpur in West Bengal. The crest of this mask was fabricated as a crown of peculiar shape. The entire facial region of this mask was painted in leafy green colour (excepting the eyes and the mouth). The eyes were painted in red background with white for the eye balls and black for the pupils. The open mouth was painted in the rim with white for the upper and the lower arrays of teeth. On the left side of the nose in bas-relief, the ear rings were shown by means of dots. The eye brows, the eye lashes and the lips were also lined with motifs of dots. Interestingly, this highly ornate mask was devoid of ears.

41. Accession Number	:	93.24
Local Name	:	Mukhota
English Equivalent	:	Mask
Ethnic Group	:	Kinnauri Tribes
Locality	:	Kinnaur
Location	:	Himachal Pradesh

This brass mask referred to as *Mukhota* is used by the Kinnauri tribes of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh. Although it is made of brass it is light in weight. The pupils and the nostrils were depicted with pores. Interestingly, a pair of pores were also provided with on both cheeks, just above the fang teeth. The eye brows, the nose, the dentition, the tongue and the cheeks were depicted as embossed parts.

42. Accession Number	:	93.25
Local Name	:	Mukhota
English Equivalent	:	Mask
Ethnic Group	:	Kinnauri Tribes
Locality	:	Kinnaur
Location	:	Himachal Pradesh

This brass mask known as *Mukhota* is used among the Kinnauri tribes of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh. It is light in weight though made of brass, as that of the mask bearing the Accession Number 93.24. A pair of horns was provided within this

metallic mask. The cheeks, the lips and the nose were shown as embossed structures. The eye brows were depicted in an ornate manner. A characteristic motif forms both as part of the ornate eye brows and the *tilak* at the centre of the forehead. On the horizontal slit of mouth, rows of teeth were shown on both the upper and the lower jaws. In the backside of the mask, a small bamboo splice has been provided with in between the gaps for the horns. Its use is not known.

43. Accession Number : 93.44  
 Local Name : Mukhota  
 English Equivalent : Mask  
 Ethnic Group : Kinnauri Tribes  
 Locality : Kinnaur  
 Location : Himachal Pradesh

This wooden mask of the Kinnauri tribes of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh is designated simply as *Mukhota*. The face of this mask has been shown in smiling pose. Its eye lids were carved beautifully. Further, at the crest of the mask a cap was depicted by meticulous carving. The elongated ear lobes were also shown as separated entities but found attached with the mask. The eyes and the nostrils were depicted as pores.

44. Accession Number : 93.45  
 Local Name : Mukhota  
 English Equivalent : Mask  
 Ethnic Group : Kinnauri Tribes  
 Locality : Kinnaur  
 Location : Himachal Pradesh

This mask of Dwarpal in wood referred to simply as *Mukhota* is used by the Kinnauri tribes of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh. The Pupils were shown as pores. A third eye was shown on the centre of the forehead as a vertical structure. On the crest, motifs of skull in crude carving were depicted. The eye brows of ornate carving seem to enhance the fierce appearance of the mask. The broad bulbous nose was provided with nostrils. The elongated ear lobes were depicted with ear ornament at the distal

end. Within the oral pore, a row of dentition adorns the upper jaw while the lower jaw was shown with another row of dentition and a tongue. A small patch of beard was depicted on the chin. All these depictions yield a ferocious appearance to this mask.

45. Accession Number : 93.46  
 Local Name : Narsing  
 English Equivalent : Narsing  
 Ethnic Group : Kinnauri Tribes  
 Locality : Kinnaur  
 Location : Himachal Pradesh

This wooden mask of *Narsing* is in vogue among the Kinnauri tribes of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh. In this ornately carved mask, no pores were provided with. The mane of the Narsing forms the outline of this mask. Interestingly, a pair of twisted horns originating from the eyes (as connecting rings) was also depicted in this mask.

46. Accession Number : 93.47  
 Local Name : Mukhota  
 English Equivalent : Mask  
 Ethnic Group : Kinnauri Tribes  
 Locality : Kinnaur  
 Location : Himachal Pradesh

This mask of Goddess Kali is found among the Kinnauri tribes of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh. Although this wooden mask was identified as that of 'Goddess Kali', on scrutiny, this resembles very much to that of the mask of '*Dwarpal*', bearing the Accession Number 93.45 (of course, without beard).

47. Accession Number : 93.53  
 Local Name : Mukhota  
 English Equivalent : Mask  
 Ethnic Group : Kinnauri Tribes  
 Locality : Kinnaur  
 Location : Himachal Pradesh

This mask of Ravan in wood is observed in utility among the Kinnauri tribes of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh. A third eye which was depicted differently gives a characteristic appearance to this mask. The ear lobes were shown separately but as attachments. The pupil region (within the eye) and the nostrils (within the nose) alone were depicted as pores. Interestingly, although mouth and teeth were shown they were depicted without pore through carving. A pair of fang teeth was also shown.

48. Accession Number : 93.54  
 Local Name : Mukhota  
 English Equivalent : Mask  
 Ethnic Group : Kinnauri Tribes  
 Locality : Kinnaur  
 Location : Himachal Pradesh

This wooden mask of Goddess Kali is used by the Kinnauri tribes of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh. And this mask is akin to that of the mask, bearing the Accession Number 93.47.

49. Accession Number : 93.55  
 Local Name : Mukhota  
 English Equivalent : Mask  
 Ethnic Group : Kinnauri Tribes  
 Locality : Kinnaur  
 Location : Himachal Pradesh

This mask of Rakshas is used by the Kinnauri tribes of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh. The depiction of skull was shown abstractly. The pupil (of the eye region) and the nostrils (of the nose) alone were depicted as pores within the eyes and the nose respectively. In addition to the teeth, a pair of fang teeth was also shown. The eye brows were depicted as a pair of elaborate designs on the forehead. A typical design of six dots was shown on both the cheeks.



50. Accession Number : 93.56  
Local Name : Mukhota  
English Equivalent : Mask  
Ethnic Group : Kinnauri Tribes  
Locality : Kinnaur  
Location : Himachal Pradesh

Although this *mukhota* ("Mask") of the Kinnauri tribes of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh is also designated as the 'mask of Rakshas' this differs considerably from the 'mask of Rakshas', bearing the Accession Number 93.55. For instance, a pair of fang teeth was depicted on each side of the upper jaw, in contrast to the usual practice of showing it on the lower jaw. A tongue was also carved as a separate entity. In the centre of the forehead, a characteristic motif of dots was also provided with (?probably for depicting a third eye). The eyes were provided with ornately carved eye brows in bas-relief. The pupil of eye was shown with pore. The nose as a bas-relief depiction was shown with nostrils. The open mouth was depicted with dentition and tongue. The ear lobes were carved as projections but as attachment to the mask.

51. Accession Number : 93.59  
Local Name : Mukhota  
English Equivalent : Mask  
Ethnic Group : Kinnauri Tribes  
Locality : Kinnaur  
Location : Himachal Pradesh

This wooden mask known as Bhairavi is in use among the Kinnauri tribes of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh. Here, the pupil (of the eye), the nostrils and the mouth were represented as pores. The elongated ear lobes form part of the carved mask. The nose was shown as a broad and bulbous organ. The eye brows were distinctly shown as bas-relief projections. Rows of dentition were depicted at the oral cavity. A triangular beard was shown on the chin.

52. Accession Number : 93.60  
 Local Name : Mukhota  
 English Equivalent : Mask  
 Ethnic Group : Kinnauri Tribes  
 Locality : Kinnaur  
 Location : Himachal Pradesh

This wooden mask of Bhairav is used by the Kinnauri tribes of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh. The third eye was depicted in the forehead as circular form. On the periphery of the crest of the mask, skulls (5 in numbers) were shown in equidistances. Eye brows were depicted distinctly in highly ornate form. The ear lobes were shown as dilated structures. The oral cavity was depicted with projecting rows of teeth on both the upper and the lower jaws. The tongue in red colour was also shown as a projection in the oral cavity. On the bas-relief nose, the nostrils were shown as pores.

53. Accession Number : 93.61  
 Local Name : Mukhota  
 English Equivalent : Mask  
 Ethnic Group : Kinnauri Tribes  
 Locality : Kinnaur  
 Location : Himachal Pradesh

This wooden mask of Bhairav is used by the Kinnauri tribes of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh. The entire mask was given with red wash, barring the eye brows (in bas-relief) that were painted in black. The pupil of the eye was provided with pore. The ear lobes were shown as elongated structures. The nose was depicted as a broad bas-relief structure. The lips were shown as thin structures. Wavy lines on the forehead give a thoughtful look to this mask. The chin is prominent and marked.

54. Accession Number : 93.62  
 Local Name : Mukhota  
 English Equivalent : Mask  
 Ethnic Group : Kinnauri Tribes  
 Locality : Kinnaur  
 Location : Himachal Pradesh

This wooden mask of Bhairav is found among the Kinnauri tribes of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh. The pupils, the nostrils and the mouth were shown as pores. A central globular projection on the forehead gives a unique appearance to this mask. A pair of elongated ear lobes was fashioned in the mask, as a side projection. The broad and bulbous nose was shown with horizontal constrictions, by means of bas-relief depictions. The eye brows as bas-relief structures were very distinctive. A thick moustache was also depicted in this mask as bas-relief. The dentition on both the jaws were also shown on the open mouth. The eye lids were depicted as thick structures. A small patch of triangular beard was also shown at the chin.

55. Accession Number	:	93.63
Local Name	:	Mukhota
English Equivalent	:	Mask
Ethnic Group	:	Kinnauri Tribes
Locality	:	Kinnaur
Location	:	Himachal Pradesh

This wooden mask of Bhairav is observed among the Kinnauri tribes of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh. And this mask resembles very much to that of the mask, bearing the Accession Number. 93.60.

56. Accession Number	:	93.64
Local Name	:	Mukhota
English Equivalent	:	Mask
Ethnic Group	:	Kinnauri Tribes
Locality	:	Kinnaur
Location	:	Himachal Pradesh

This wooden mask of Bhairav is found in use among the Kinnauri tribes of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh. And this mask resembles to a large extend to the mask, bearing the Accession Number 93.60.

57. Accession Number : 93.65  
 Local Name : Mukhota  
 English Equivalent : Mask  
 Ethnic Group : Kinnauri Tribes  
 Locality : Kinnaur  
 Location : Himachal Pradesh

This wooden mask of Bhairav is used by the Kinnauri tribes of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh. In this mask, the eye brows were depicted as distinct entities by facing upwards. A distinct motif of six dots in a typical way occupies the centre of the forehead. The pupil of eye alone was shown as pore. The mouth was represented by carving without leaving a pore but only with dentition. Though the nostrils were depicted through carving they were devoid of pores. The ear lobes were shown separately but as attachments.

58. Accession Number : 93.66  
 Local Name : Mukhota  
 English Equivalent : Mask  
 Ethnic Group : Kinnauri Tribes  
 Locality : Kinnaur  
 Location : Himachal Pradesh

This wooden mask representing Bhairav is observed among the Kinnauri tribes of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh. A third eye was depicted (with a half open structure with eye lid covering) in the centre of the forehead. The ear lobes were separate but shown as attachments. The mouth is represented by a distinctive horizontal slit. A pair of fang teeth was depicted extending to outside from the upper jaw. The pupil (of eye) was left as pore. The nose is both broad and bulbous in nature.

59. Accession Number : 93.67  
 Local Name : Mukhota  
 English Equivalent : Mask  
 Ethnic Group : Kinnauri Tribes  
 Locality : Kinnaur  
 Location : Himachal Pradesh

This wooden mask of Bhairav is found in vogue among the Kinnauri tribes of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh. In this mask, the third eye was depicted as a serpentine hood-like bas-relief projection. The elaborately carved eye brows seem to link the hood-like third eye. The protruding eyes and the broad bulbous nose remain as bas-relief structures. The ear lobes as projections occupy the side ways of the mask. The wide open mouth as a horizontal opening was bestowed with rows of upper and lower dentition, along with a pair of fang teeth on both corners and a centrally placed tongue. The entire mask was painted in brick red.

60. Accession Number	:	93.68
Local Name	:	Mukhota
English Equivalent	:	Mask
Ethnic Group	:	Kinnauri Tribes
Locality	:	Kinnaur
Location	:	Himachal Pradesh

This wooden mask referred simply as *Mukhota* ("Mask") is used by the Kinnauri tribes of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh. In this wooden mask, metal sheets of copper, brass and base silver were used to mask the various projections such as skulls at its crest, ears, eye brows, eye balls, third eye, ears, extended ear lobes, checks, lips, tongue, chin. The placement of various metal sheets in a particular sequence gives a symmetry in alignment to this mask. The circular pores were provided with to mark the pupil of the eyes. The rim of the mouth was presented in the shape of a trapezium.

61. Accession Number	:	93.69
Local Name	:	Mukhota
English Equivalent	:	Mask
Ethnic Group	:	Kinnauri Tribes
Locality	:	Kinnaur
Location	:	Himachal Pradesh

This wooden mask referred to simply as *Mukhota* ("Mask") which is used by the Kinnauri tribes of Kinnaur was crafted with brass and silver inlay works. And consequently, this mask is rich with decorations.



62. Accession Number : 93.70  
 Local Name : Mukhota  
 English Equivalent : Mask  
 Ethnic Group : Kinnauri Tribes  
 Locality : Kinnaur  
 Location : Himachal Pradesh

This wooden mask of Dragon is in vogue among the Kinnauri tribes of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh. Its crest was fabricated with motifs of skull. A third eye was presented at the centre of the forehead as a vertical structure. A pair of eyes was shown with central pores over it. The eye brows were presented very ornately. The nostrils were presented over the broad bulbous nose. The floral designs cover the periphery of the mask. Although a pair of fang teeth remains intact a few teeth were noted, as missing parts. The ear lobes are wanting.

63. Accession Number : 93.315  
 Local Name : Khekhda  
 English Equivalent : Mask  
 Ethnic Group : Gond Tribes  
 Locality : Mandla  
 Location : Madhya Pradesh

This wooden mask designated simply as *Khekhda* ("Mask") is found in use among the Gond tribes of Mandla in Madhya Pradesh. In this mask, interestingly, only the face was shown in relief. The crest of the mask was crafted as a head gear leading to a central stalk as tuft like structure towards upwards and ends as a nose in the downwards. The pupil of eye was depicted by means of pore. The mouth was shown as a rectangular opening. Its inner serration represents the dentition. The ear lobes were depicted as bas-relief depictions of square brackets on both sides. The entire mask was crafted as an inwardly curved body to cover the face of the wearer in a befitting manner. In short, this mask exhibits minimum efforts in carving but with maximum depictions. This mask gives an indication that its precursor might be pumpkin.

64. Accession Number : 93.316  
Local Name : Khekhda  
English Equivalent : Mask  
Ethnic Group : Gond Tribes  
Locality : Mandla  
Location : Madhya Pradesh

This wooden mask known as *Khekhda* is used among the Gond tribes of Mandla in Madhya Pradesh. This mask resembles that of the mask, bearing the Accession Number 93.315 (excepting the fact that the eyes have been depicted as mere pores, without details such as eye lids, eye balls and pupils). In addition, the beard was shown by means of a triangular cut at the chin.

65. Accession Number : 93.317  
Local Name : Khekhda  
English Equivalent : Mask  
Ethnic Group : Gond Tribes  
Locality : Mandla  
Location : Madhya Pradesh

The Gond tribes of Mandla in Madhya Pradesh are observed to use this wooden mask known as *Khekhda* ("Mask") in their local parlance. This resembles very much that of the mask, bearing the Accession Number 93.316.

66. Accession Number : 93.318  
Local Name : Khekhda  
English Equivalent : Mask  
Ethnic Group : Gond Tribes  
Locality : Mandla  
Location : Madhya Pradesh

This wooden mask known locally as *Khekhda* is used by the Gond tribes of Madhya Pradesh. This resembles closely with the mask, bearing the Accession Number 93.316 (excepting the fact that the central stalk has been modified as a caudal fin-like structure instead of a tuft-like projection).

67. Accession Number : 93.319  
 Local Name : Khekhda  
 English Equivalent : Mask  
 Ethnic Group : Gond Tribes  
 Locality : Mandla  
 Location : Madhya Pradesh

This wooden mask of the Gond tribes of Mandla in Madhya Pradesh is termed *Khekhda* ("Mask"). This resembles very closely to the mask, bearing the Accession Number 93.316.

68. Accession Number : 93.322  
 Local Name : Khekhda  
 English Equivalent : Mask  
 Ethnic Group : Gond Tribes  
 Locality : Mandla  
 Location : Madhya Pradesh

This wooden mask referred to as *Khekhda* by the Gond tribes of Mandla in Madhya Pradesh exhibits a very elaborate bas-relief work. The highly elongated shape of the mask with central stalk-like projection gives a clue that such masks might have been crafted originally out of dried bottle gourds. The crest of this mask forms a cap-like structure with an upright tuft at its centre. An elongated bas-relief structure forms the nose while a pair of bracket-like bas-relief carvings marks the ear lobes. A pair of eyes was depicted on both the sides of the nose. A small rectangular slit just beneath the nose forms the mouth.

69. Accession Number : 93.375  
 Local Name : Khekhda  
 English Equivalent : Mask  
 Ethnic Group : Gond Tribes  
 Locality : Mandla  
 Location : Madhya Pradesh

This wooden mask that is known as *Khekhda* is found in utility among the Gond tribes of Mandla in Madhya Pradesh. This mask resembles closely with that of the mask, bearing the Accession Number 93.316 (excepting the fact that the stalk-like tuft was broadened to be the cap over the crest and the ears were not depicted at all).

70. Accession Number : 93.376  
Local Name : Khekhda  
English Equivalent : Mask  
Ethnic Group : Gond Tribes  
Locality : Mandla  
Location : Madhya Pradesh

This wooden mask which is designated simply as *Khekhda* ("Mask") is used by the Gond tribes of Mandla in Madhya Pradesh. This mask is closely akin to that of the mask, bearing the Accession Number 93.375 (excepting the fact that the eyes were provided with eye brows and the eye lids & the mouth as a bas-relief structure was depicted in closed condition).

71. Accession Number : 93.377  
Local Name : Khekhda  
English Equivalent : Mask  
Ethnic Group : Gond Tribes  
Locality : Mandla  
Location : Madhya Pradesh

This wooden mask which is termed *Khekhda* is observed among the Gond tribes of Mandla in Madhya Pradesh. A wooden plank slightly curved inwards on the lateral sides (so as to cover the face of the wearer) was chosen to craft this mask. Evidence of minimum effort in carving could be visualized here. For instance, in this mask only the 'face' was shown in relief; and the central projection on this mask gives a tuft-like appearance; A slight upper demarcation of carving brings to the mask a headgear-like appearance. A pair of holes made on both the sides of the nose represent the eyes. A rectangular pore with serration depicts the mouth and the dentition respectively.

72. Accession Number : 93.378  
 Local Name : Khekhda  
 English Equivalent : Mask  
 Ethnic Group : Gond Tribes  
 Locality : Mandla  
 Location : Madhya Pradesh

This wooden mask referred to as *Khekhda* ("Mask") is used by the Gond tribes of Mandla in Madhya Pradesh. This mask resembles very much with that of the mask, bearing the Accession Number 93.376 but deviates from it on two aspects. First, it is devoid of eye brows and eye lids; secondly, the mouth was depicted not as a bas-relief but merely through line drawing of ink (?charcoal).

73. Accession Number : 93.409  
 Local Name : Mukhodi  
 English Equivalent : Mask  
 Ethnic Group : Gond Tribes  
 Locality : Mandla  
 Location : Madhya Pradesh

This wooden mask termed simply as *Mukhodi* is observed among the Gond tribes of Mandla in Madhya Pradesh. This exhibits a crudely fashioned face with a long neck. The eye brows, the nose, the lips and the beard were shown through serrated linings. A pair of elongated ear lobes was also depicted by means of crude carving. The eyes were shown by scooping of two small grooves on both the sides of the crudely fabricated nose. The mouth was shown as a more or less oval shaped opening. The dentition in the upper jaw was depicted by making a series of holes by means of iron nails. This mask stands as an apt example for minimum effort in mask-making with minimum tools.

74. Accession Number : 95.66  
 Local Name : Khekhda  
 English Equivalent : Mask  
 Ethnic Group : Baiga Tribes  
 Locality : Dindori  
 Location : Madhya Pradesh



This huge and elongated wooden mask simply referred to as *Khekhda* by the Baiga tribes of Dindori in Madhya Pradesh shows that clear cut incisions, bas-reliefs and pores on requisite spots could result into a human face. The incision at the top demarcates the crown of head, having a centrally projected wood as the upright tuft of hair. While a pair of C shaped bas-reliefs on both the sides depict the ears the elongated bas-relief ridge and a pair of pores on its both sides represent the nose and the eyes respectively. A rectangularly carved slit with rows of projecting chips signify the mouth and the dentition respectively. The eye brows, the moustache and the beard were drawn over the body of the mask in appropriate spots by means of ink (? charcoal). Of these various depictions, interestingly, the beard was shown by wavy lines instead of vertical lines. A red colour thread having a central black band tied with this mask is used to wear it.

75. Accession Number	:	95.67
Local Name	:	Khekhda
English Equivalent	:	Mask
Ethnic Group	:	Baiga Tribes
Locality	:	Dindori
Location	:	Madhya Pradesh

This wooden mask of the Baiga tribes of Dindori in Madhya Pradesh is same as that of the mask, bearing the Accession Number 95.66.

76. Accession Number	:	95.276
Local Name	:	Ghoda
English Equivalent	:	Horse
Ethnic Group	:	Bhatra Tribes
Locality	:	-
Location	:	Orissa

This papier mache mask of *Ghoda* ("Horse") is used by the Bhatra tribes of Orissa. With simple and basic colours like black, red and white the various parts of this mask was painted. For instance, by employing black colour the parts such as snout, pupil and rim of ear lobes were painted; Red colour was used to show the inner

cavity of ear lobes, the rim of mouth and the nostrils; The dentition and the eye balls were painted in white; Alternate bands of black and red were painted to show the ornate neck band; And both black and red colours were used to depict the eye brows.

77. Accession Number : 95.277  
 Local Name : Jatapakshi  
 English Equivalent : Jataiyu  
 Ethnic Group : Bhatra Tribes  
 Locality : -  
 Location : Orissa

This mask of papier mache representing the *Jatapakshi* was crafted and utilized by the Bhatra tribes of Orissa. The head of the bird was devised as the mask. Its prominent beak and the ornately designed crest are aesthetic delights to the onlookers.

78. Accession Number : 95.278  
 Local Name : Jangli Kutta  
 English Equivalent : Dhole  
 Ethnic Group : Bhatra Tribes  
 Locality : -  
 Location : Orissa

This mask crafted out of papier mache is termed *Jangli Kutta* (Lit. "Wild dog") by the Bhatra tribes of Orissa. The rim of mouth of the dhole was painted in black.

79. Accession Number : 95.279  
 Local Name : Genda  
 English Equivalent : Rhinoceros  
 Ethnic Group : Bhatra Tribes  
 Locality : -  
 Location : Orissa

This mask of papier mache referred to as *Genda* ("Rhinoceros") is observed among the Bhatra tribes of Orissa. It was painted with simple and basic colours, viz., black and red. While the horn and the ears were depicted as projections the dentition was shown by means of black lines, forming rectangular blocks.

80. Accession Number : 95.280  
Local Name : Bail  
English Equivalent : Ox  
Ethnic Group : Bhatra Tribes  
Locality : -  
Location : Orissa

This mask of papier mache known as *Bail* ("Ox") is in use among the Bhatra tribes of Orissa. This was painted in simple and basic colours such as black, red, yellow and white. The horns which were shown as projections twisted away from one another become the aesthetic treat to the beholding onlookers. Here, the mouth is depicted in open condition. Parts such as the eyes, the nostrils and the ears were drawn on the body of the mask itself.

81. Accession Number : 95.281  
Local Name : Rakhyas  
English Equivalent : Demon  
Ethnic Group : Bhatra Tribes  
Locality : -  
Location : Orissa

This mask of *Rakhyas* ("Demon"), made of papier mache is found attested among the Bhatra tribes of Orissa. Its chin was depicted with a characteristic design of dots. The paired fang teeth were shown as erect structures instead of depicting them downwardly. A third eye was also depicted at the centre of the forehead. The mouth was shown as inwardly drawn gap where the tongue was depicted in yellow, with an outline of it in black. The moustache was shown as an upturned structure. The ear rings were also depicted on the ears.

82. Accession Number : 95.282  
Local Name : Rani  
English Equivalent : Queen  
Ethnic Group : Bhatra Tribes  
Locality : -  
Location : Orissa

This mask of *Rani* ("Queen") which is made of papier mache is used by the Bhatra tribes of Orissa. The face that was painted in yellow adds more charm to the feminine form presented in the mask. The ear stud, the nose ring, the hair bun and the chin were depicted with aesthetic flair. A characteristic design of dots were also shown in the cheek.

83. Accession Number : 95.283  
 Local Name : Brahma  
 English Equivalent : Brahma  
 Ethnic Group : Bhatra Tribes  
 Locality : -  
 Location : Orissa

This mask of papier mache representing *Brahma* is found attested among the Bhatra tribes of Orissa. A conical crown in the centre with a pair of faces shown facing opposite directions, having a considerable space for the head of the mask-wearer brings the desired results to this mask.

84. Accession Number : 95.284  
 Local Name : Brahma  
 English Equivalent : Brahma  
 Ethnic Group : Bhatra Tribes  
 Locality : -  
 Location : Orissa

This mask of the Bhatra tribes of Orissa representing *Brahma* is similar to that of the mask, bearing the Accession Number 95.283.

85. Accession Number : 95.285  
 Local Name : Rakhyas  
 English Equivalent : Demon  
 Ethnic Group : Bhatra Tribes  
 Locality : -  
 Location : Orissa

This mask made of papier mache which represents *Rakhyas* ("Demon") among the Bhatra tribes of Orissa is akin to that of the mask, bearing the Accession Number 95.281.

86. Accession Number : 95.286  
Local Name : Hanuman  
English Equivalent : Hanuman  
Ethnic Group : Bhatra Tribes  
Locality : -  
Location : Orissa

This paper mache mask designated as *Hanuman* is used by the Bhatra tribes of Orissa. In this mask, various parts such as the crown, the ears, the ear ornaments, the eyes, the nose, the mouth were painted in a painstaking manner. The snout was depicted in this mask by providing a prognathous jaw.

87. Accession Number : 95.287  
Local Name : Shankar Nagsarp  
English Equivalent : Shankar Nagsarp  
Ethnic Group : Bhatra Tribes  
Locality : -  
Location : Orissa

This mask made out of papier mache representing *Shankar Nagsarp* (Lit. "Shiva's cobra snake") is found in use among the Bhatra tribes of Orissa. A cobra with its upraised hood and coiled body forms the body of the mask. In this mask, the cobra, its hood and coiled body were all depicted through painted lines of two simple and basic colours, viz., yellow and black.

88. Accession Number : 95.288  
Local Name : Mayamrig  
English Equivalent : Mystic Deer  
Ethnic Group : Bhatra Tribes  
Locality : -  
Location : Orissa



This papier mache mask of *Mayamrig* (Lit. "Mystic deer") is observed in utility among the Bhatra tribes of Orissa. The mask shows a mystic deer, having a pair of heads in opposite directions on a single body.

89. Accession Number : 95.289  
 Local Name : Mayamrig  
 English Equivalent : Mystic Deer  
 Ethnic Group : Bhatra Tribes  
 Locality : -  
 Location : Orissa

This mask of papier mache which is in use among the Bhatra tribes of Orissa resembles that of the mask, bearing the Accession Number 95.288.

90. Accession Number : 95.290  
 Local Name : Rakhyas  
 English Equivalent : Demon  
 Ethnic Group : Bhatra Tribes  
 Locality : -  
 Location : Orissa

This mask of *Rakhyas* ("Demon") of the Bhatra tribes of Orissa is similar in contour as that of the mask, bearing the Accession Number 95.281.

91. Accession Number : 95.291  
 Local Name : Raja  
 English Equivalent : King  
 Ethnic Group : Bhatra Tribes  
 Locality : -  
 Location : Orissa

This papier mache mask of *Raja* ("King") is found attested among the Bhatra tribes of Orissa. The face of the mask is painted in green, in contradistinction to that of the face of 'Mask of Queen' [of Accession Number 95.282] in yellow. The elongated ear lobes were decorated with ear rings. The eye brows were painted in white while

the lips were painted in red. This mask could be viewed as the counterpart of the mask of 'Rani', bearing the Accession Number 95.282.

92. Accession Number : 95.292  
Local Name : Gajanan  
English Equivalent : Ganesh  
Ethnic Group : Bhatra Tribes  
Locality : -  
Location : Orissa

This mask of *Gajanan* ("Ganesh") made up of papier mache is found attested among the Bhatra tribes of Orissa. A third eye was also depicted in this mask at the centre of the forehead but without eye lid and eye lash. Tusk is wanting in this mask. This mask was painted by means of simple and basic colours such as blue, black, red, white.

93. Accession Number : 95.293  
Local Name : Mor  
English Equivalent : Peacock  
Ethnic Group : Bhatra Tribes  
Locality : -  
Location : Orissa

This papier mache mask of the Bhatra tribes of Orissa represents *Mor* ("Peacock"). As this mask is relatively small in size and cannot be wear even by children, it is presumed that it might have been used by holding the central supporting stick which runs vertically inside this mask.

94. Accession Number : 95.294  
Local Name : Bagh  
English Equivalent : Lion  
Ethnic Group : Bhatra Tribes  
Locality : -  
Location : Orissa

This papier mache mask of 'Lion' which was erroneously recorded as *Bagh* (Lit. "Tiger") is used by the Bhatra tribes of Orissa. The mane of the lion was replicated by employing the filamental fibres of coconut. The entire face of the lion was painted with yellow colour to bring natural effect; The protruding tongue was painted in red to create a fear psychosis in the mind of the onlookers.

95. Accession Number : 95.458  
 Local Name : Baak  
 English Equivalent : Mask  
 Ethnic Group : Lahula Tribes  
 Locality : Kullu  
 Location : Himachal Pradesh

In this wooden mask of the Lahula tribes of Kullu in Himachal Pradesh, nine faces were arranged in three tiers having a set of three faces in each tier. A set of skull atop each face of this mask. The eyes were depicted as protruding structures. A third eye was also depicted at the centre of the forehead in globular form as that of the original pair of eyes. The mouth was shaped into a trapezium and carved into a hollow, having dentition on both the jaws.

96. Accession Number : 95.467  
 Local Name : Hiran  
 English Equivalent : Deer  
 Ethnic Group : Lahula Tribes  
 Locality : Kullu  
 Location : Himachal Pradesh

This wooden mask referred to as *Hiran* ("Deer") is in use among the Lahula tribes of Kullu in Himachal Pradesh. This ornately carved mask, although not painted, exhibits natural musculature due to the combined effects of varnish over the highly grained wood. The screw type curved horns and the upright ear lobes stand testimony to the carving skill of the Lahula tribal craftsman. A central red dot covered by spindle shaped black motif forms the *tilak* (? third eye) in between the eyes on both sides. The eye was left as pore while its lash was shown in black. The mouth was depicted as a slit, having a central split upwards to show the snout aptly.

97.	Accession Number	:	95.468
	Local Name	:	Hiran
	English Equivalent	:	Deer
	Ethnic Group	:	Lahula Tribes
	Locality	:	Kullu
	Location	:	Himachal Pradesh

This wooden mask of *Hiran* ("Deer") of the Lahula tribes of Kullu in Himachal Pradesh differs only slightly with that of the mask, bearing the Accession Number 95. 467. For instance, this ornately carved mask was painted chiefly in pink while its certain parts were depicted in black and white. The pair of straight antlers was painted both in black and white alternatively. While the eyebrows were painted in black the front of the prognathous jaw was painted in white. The eyes were shown as slits, below the eye brows in black colouration. Another slit in the ultimate end of the snout represents the mouth. A pair of pores on the snout designates the nostrils. White and yellow dots were mixedly marked all over the facial region of the mask to signify the skin of a deer.

98.	Accession Number	:	95.470
	Local Name	:	Mukhota
	English Equivalent	:	Mask
	Ethnic Group	:	Lahula Tribes
	Locality	:	Kullu
	Location	:	Himachal Pradesh

This ornately carved wooden mask (? representing a demon) is used by the Lahula tribes of Kullu in Himachal Pradesh. While a pair of pores represent the eyes both the eye brows and the eye lashes were shown by means of a typical serrated design around the eyes. The forehead was decorated with an ornate design. A pair of horns was also carved out into projections as part of the mask. The nostrils were also depicted as pores on both sides of the carved nose. A pair of fang teeth, jutting out of the mouth pore gives a ferocious appearance to the mask.

99. Accession Number : 95.836  
Local Name : Nayala-Guram  
English Equivalent : Horse  
Ethnic Group : Bagata / Jatapu Tribes  
Locality : -  
Location : Andhra Pradesh

This ornately carved wooden mask known as *Nayala-Guram* ("Horse") is found attested among the Bagata / Jatapu tribes of Andhra Pradesh. In this mask, the lower jaw of horse was fashioned and fixed as a movable part. Dentition was shown by painting a series of rectangular boxes over the upper and the lower jaws. The projected arenas of mask such as the snout, the ears were painted with simple and basic colours, namely, black and white.



## APPENDIX - II

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### SELECT PHOTOGRAPHS OF TRIBAL MASKS STUDIED



Wooden Mask of  
Konche-Ngdorza, Sikkim  
(Sl. No. 1)



Wooden Mask of  
Maha Kala, Sikkim  
(Sl. No. 2)



Wooden Mask of  
Lama Dance, Sikkim  
(Sl. No. 3)



Wooden Mask of  
a Deity, Sikkim  
(Sl. No. 4)



**Nakta** - Wooden Mask of Bison-Horn  
Maria, Tongpal, Madhya Pradesh  
(Sl. No. 7)



**Narsing** - Wooden Mask of  
Kokna, Gujarat  
(Sl. No. 8)



**Ravan Nee Bahmi Asaadi**  
Wooden Mask of Kokna, Gujarat  
(Sl. No. 9)



**Vaali Sugraam** Wooden Mask of  
Kokna, Gujarat  
(Sl. No. 11)



**Ethoba-Rukmaiya** Wooden Mask  
for Bhavada Dance of Kokna,  
Gujarat  
(Sl. No. 12)



**Popat** Wooden Mask of  
Kokna, Gujarat  
(Sl. No.13)



**Pundalik Bhagat**  
Wooden Mask of Kokna, Gujarat  
(Sl. No.14)



**Durga Devi** - Wooden Mask of  
Kokna, Gujarat  
(Sl. No. 15)



**Tala Kummati** Wooden Mask of  
Musari, Trichur, Kerala  
(Sl. No. 16)



**Kattalan** Wooden Mask for  
Kummati Ritual, Kerala  
(Sl. No.17)



**Mukhota Rakchas** Wooden Mask of  
Muria, Bastar, Madhya Pradesh  
(Sl. No. 18)



**Bell Mukhotu** - Papier Mache Mask of  
Muria, Madhya Pradesh  
(Sl. No. 19)



**Mapar Char** Mask of  
Rabha, Jalpaiguri, West Bengal  
(Sl. No. 20)



**Mahi Ravan** Wooden Mask of  
Rajbansi, Jalpaiguri, West Bengal  
(Sl. No. 21)





**Megunad** Wooden Mask of  
Rajbansi, Jalpaiguri, West Bengal  
(Sl. No. 22)



**Nikasha** Wooden Mask of  
Rajbansi, Jalpaiguri, West Bengal  
(Sl. No. 23)



**Khetua** Wooden Mask of  
Rajbansi, Jalpaiguri, West Bengal  
(Sl. No. 24)



**Hanuman** Wooden Mask of  
Rajbansi, Jalpaiguri, West Bengal  
(Sl. No. 25)



**Kali** Wooden Mask of  
Rajbansi, Jalpaiguri, West Bengal  
(Sl. No. 26)



**Soldier** - Wooden Mask of  
Rajbansi, Jalpaiguri, West Bengal  
(Sl. No. 28)



**Sugrib** Wooden Mask of  
Rajbansi, Jalpaiguri, West Bengal  
(Sl. No. 29)



**Shiknidhal** Wooden Mask of  
Rajbansi, Jalpaiguri, West Bengal  
(Sl. No. 30)



**Chamunda** Wooden Mask of  
Rajbansi, West Dinajpur,  
West Bengal (Sl. No. 31)



**Hanuman** Wooden Mask of  
Rajbansi, West Dinajpur, West Bengal  
(Sl. No. 32)



**Bagh Mashan** Wooden Mask of  
Rajbansi, West Dinajpur,  
West Bengal  
(Sl. No. 33)



**Angad** Wooden Mask of  
Rajbansi, West Dinajpur, West Bengal  
(Sl. No. 34)



**Taraka** Wooden Mask of  
Rajbansi, West Dinajpur, West Bengal  
(Sl. No. 35)



**Jataiyu** Wooden Mask of  
Rajbansi, West Dinajpur,  
West Bengal  
(Sl. No. 36)



**Kumbakarna** Wooden Mask of  
Rajbansi, West Dinajpur, West Bengal  
(Sl. No. 37)



**Mashan Kali** Wooden Mask of  
Rajbansi, West Dinajpur, West Bengal  
(Sl. No. 38)



**Chamar Kali** Wooden Mask of  
Rajbansi, West Dinajpur,  
West Bengal  
(Sl. No. 39)



**Chang Kali** Wooden Mask of  
Rajbansi, West Dinajpur, West Bengal  
(Sl. No. 40)





**Mukhota** Brass Mask of  
Kinnauri, Kinnaur, Himachal  
Pradesh (Sl. No. 41)



**Mukhota** Brass Mask of  
Kinnauri, Kinnaur, Himachal  
Pradesh (Sl. No. 42)



**Mukhota** Wooden Mask of  
Kinnauri, Kinnaur, Himachal  
Pradesh (Sl. No. 43)



**Mukhota** Wooden Mask of  
Kinnauri, Kinnaur, Himachal  
Pradesh (Sl. No. 44)



**Narsing** Wooden Mask of  
Kinnauri, Kinnaur, Himachal  
Pradesh (Sl. No. 45)



**Mukhota** Wooden Mask of  
Kinnauri, Kinnaur, Himachal  
Pradesh (Sl. No. 46)



**Mukhota** Wooden Mask of  
Kinnauri, Kinnaur, Himachal  
Pradesh (Sl. No. 47)



**Mukhota** Wooden Mask of  
Kinnauri, Kinnaur, Himachal  
Pradesh (Sl. No. 49)



**Mukhota** Wooden Mask of  
Kinnauri, Kinnaur, Himachal  
Pradesh (Sl. No. 50)





**Mukhota** Wooden Mask of Kinnauri, Kinnaur, Himachal Pradesh (Sl. No. 51)



**Mukhota** Wooden Mask of Kinnauri, Kinnaur, Himachal Pradesh (Sl. No. 52)



**Mukhota** Wooden Mask of Kinnauri, Kinnaur, Himachal Pradesh (Sl. No. 53)



**Mukhota** Wooden Mask of Kinnauri, Kinnaur, Himachal Pradesh (Sl. No. 54)



**Mukhota** Wooden Mask of Kinnauri, Kinnaur, Himachal Pradesh (Sl. No. 55)



**Mukhota** Wooden Mask of Kinnauri, Kinnaur, Himachal Pradesh (Sl. No. 56)



**Mukhota** Wooden Mask of Kinnauri, Kinnaur, Himachal Pradesh (Sl. No. 57)



**Mukhota** Wooden Mask of Kinnauri, Kinnaur, Himachal Pradesh (Sl. No. 58)



**Mukhota** Wooden Mask of Kinnauri, Kinnaur, Himachal Pradesh (Sl. No. 60)



**Mukhota** Wooden Mask of  
Kinnauri, Kinnaur, Himachal  
Pradesh (Sl. No. 61)



**Mukhota** Wooden Mask of  
Kinnauri, Kinnaur, Himachal  
Pradesh (Sl. No. 62)



**Mukhodi** Wooden Mask of  
Gond, Mandla, Madhya  
Pradesh (Sl. No. 64)



**Khekhda** Wooden Mask of  
Gond, Mandla, Madhya  
Pradesh (Sl. No. 68)



**Ghoda** Papier Mache Mask of  
Bhatra, Orissa  
(Sl. No. 76)



**Jata Pakshi** Papier Mache Mask of  
Bhatra, Orissa  
(Sl. No. 77)



**Genda** Papier Mache Mask of  
Bhatra, Orissa  
(Sl. No. 79)



**Bail** Papier Mache Mask of  
Bhatra, Orissa  
(Sl. No. 80)



**Rakhyas** Papier Mache Mask of  
Bhatra, Orissa  
(Sl. No. 81)





**Brahma** Papier Mache Mask of  
Bhatra, Orissa  
(Sl. No. 83)



**Brahma** Papier Mache Mask of  
Bhatra, Orissa  
(Sl. No. 84)



**Rakhyas** Papier Mache Mask of  
Bhatra, Orissa  
(Sl. No. 85)



**Hanuman** Papier Mache Mask of  
Bhatra, Orissa  
(Sl. No. 86)



**Sankar** Papier Mache Mask of  
Bhatra, Orissa  
(Sl. No. 87)



**Rakhyas** Papier Mache Mask of  
Bhatra, Orissa  
(Sl. No. 90)



**Raja** Papier Mache Mask of  
Bhatra, Orissa  
(Sl. No. 91)



**Mor** Papier Mache Mask of  
Bhatra, Orissa  
(Sl. No. 93)



**Bagh** Papier Mache Mask of  
Bhatra, Orissa  
(Sl. No. 94)



**Baak** Wooden Mask of  
Lahula, Kullu, Himachal Pradesh  
(Sl. No. 95)



**Hiran** Wooden Mask of  
Lahula, Kullu, Himachal Pradesh  
(Sl. No. 96)



**Hiran** Wooden Mask of  
Lahula, Kullu, Himachal Pradesh  
(Sl. No. 97)



**Mukhota** Wooden Mask of  
Lahula, Kullu, Himachal Pradesh  
(Sl. No. 98)





*Chehre* Exhibition : A View



*Chehre* Exhibition : Another View



*Chehre* Exhibition  
Yet : Another View



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